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A DIPLOMATIST IN EUROPE

Arthur H. Hadley

A DIPLOMATIST IN EUROPE

By the Right Hon.

SIR ARTHUR HARDINGE
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TO
MY WIFE

ERRATA

p. 27, line 8. For 'the King's approaching marriage' *read* 'the Spanish King's approaching marriage.'
p. 32, line 14. For 'Permanent Secretary of State' *read* 'Permanent Under-Secretary of State.'
p. 50, last line. For 'Signor' *read* 'Señor.'
p. 59, line 4. For 'Ruy' *read* 'Ruiz.'
p. 59, line 28. For 'Melquiades' *read* 'Melquiados.'
p. 60, line 3. For 'Ruez' *read* 'Ruiz.'
p. 100, line 6. For 'Tolstoi' *read* 'Tolstoy.'
p. 118, line 19. For 'Diebitch' *read* 'Diebitsch.'
p. 136, line 2. For 'Pobiedinostzeff' *read* 'Pobiedonostzeff.'
p. 143, line 31. For 'Vladimoresco' *read* 'Vladimiresco.'
p. 144, line 24. For 'Pharnarist' *read* 'Phanarist.'
p. 159, line 14. For 'Kossutli's' *read* 'Kossuth's'.
p. 164, line 3. For 'International' *read* 'European.'
p. 164, line 7. For 'the Iron Gates' *read* 'Galatz.'
p. 168, line 13. For 'Sir Donald Mackenzie' *read* 'Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace.'

A DIPLOMATIST IN EUROPE

ingly difficult to make his home so far away from London; for in those days there was no direct line from Kibworth to St. Pancras, and we had to change at Bedford or Hitchin for King's Cross. My mother, moreover, had developed chest trouble, and the doctors recommended her to winter, which she did for three years running, at or near Hyères, in the south of France. This was, in one way, an advantageous event from the point of view of my own education, for it obliged me to master French, first under the supervision of a rather crabbed old scholar, a Monsieur Payan, with whom I daily laboured at *Télémaque*, and afterwards with the Abbé Perrier, a French clergyman who was chaplain to a lady of our acquaintance, Madame de Prailly. My Abbé was a very charming teacher, and under his guidance I plunged with eagerness into the History of France, as well as into the Latin classics, in which I thus became daily more proficient. An event in my life was my being made to compose a Latin theme on some event in Cæsar's career, for submission to Monseigneur Dupanloup, the then celebrated Bishop of Orleans, who had come on a visit to Hyères; and I long remembered with awe my introduction to that stately prelate, whose ring all the boys presented to him had to kiss, and who was graciously pleased, far more than it probably deserved, to approve of my youthful Latin effort. He belonged, I believe, to that Liberal or Gallican section of the Church of France, which doubted the wisdom of proclaiming the Infallibility of the Pope, and he went so far as to imply in conversation with my father that there was something to be said against, as well as for, the compulsory celibacy of the Catholic clergy, in connection with which he was said to have related a somewhat comic experience of his own. He had been

to hold a Confirmation, or some such service, in a village of his diocese, but had missed the last train back, and was forced to spend the night at his host's parsonage. There was no spare bedroom, but the single one occupied by the curate possessed an extremely spacious bed, which its owner suggested that the Bishop should, *faute de mieux*, share with him. The prelate, tired by a long day, slept soundly in it, but was roused at an early hour by several blows and pinches in the back, each more vigorous than the last, whilst a half-sleepy, half-angry voice exclaimed, 'Mais, lève-toi donc, Annette, n'entends-tu pas le boulanger qui a frappé trois fois à la porte.' He then realized that he was filling the space in the nuptial couch which was usually occupied by his reverend host's female cook. It would not, of course, be fair to generalize from a solitary incident, and nothing is so difficult as to relax such a rule as clerical celibacy, in countries where it has once taken root. The virgin Queen Elizabeth avowed her preference for priestly concubinage to priestly marriage; and in Portugal to-day many priests, who have concubines and children, shrink from a public repudiation of their vows of celibacy by a marriage that would scandalize their flocks. The whole question is one of great difficulty, which it would be unwise to try to solve otherwise than with the full consent of the religious authorities, and it must therefore long remain outside what the newspapers term 'the domain of practical politics.'

Another of the memories of our stay in southern France is of a visit which we paid to the great penal settlement at Toulon. A friend of my parents was sub-prefect of that town and its district, and we combined an inspection of the 'Bagne,' in which hundreds of convicts, like Jean Valjean in *Les Misérables*, with

heavy logs chained to their ankles, were performing hard labour in various forms. This sight, which I beheld for the first time, made a powerful impression on my mind, and it required another first visit in the evening to the theatre, to a play called *Le Roi Bobèche*, in which King Chilpéric, Frédégonda, and Brunnhilda all appeared, to dispel the effect produced on my mind by the horrors of this form of penal servitude; but the workshops where more favoured convicts were carving little wooden boxes and other playthings, a few of which we purchased as mementoes, relieved in some degree these first impressions.

After my third winter in France, where I had made several friends of my own age, we returned for a short time to our old home at Kibworth. I had just been appointed a page to Queen Victoria, and both during my first private school days at Sevenoaks, and for four years later at Eton, I was frequently on duty, in a smart red 'Queen Anne' uniform, knee-breeches and sword, at the opening of Parliament, and at the various Courts and Drawing Rooms of the season. These latter functions, albeit somewhat tedious, I rather enjoyed, more especially as they were preceded by a sumptuous lunch with the high dignitaries of the Royal Household, of whom the Duke of Grafton, at that time Lord Charles Fitzroy, appeared to be the leading spirit, and was certainly always most kind. In former days, when the Prince Consort was alive, the pages attended the Court Balls, but these had ceased with his death, and even if that sad event had not occurred, there had been talk of suppressing the attendance, until long after midnight, of these boys, since they were sometimes inclined to over-eat themselves at the Ball suppers, and to drink more champagne than was good for them, so that they were not always quite

sober or steady when they had to walk back in the procession, in the charge of Her Majesty's train. The opening of Parliament was then, as now, an interesting ceremony, though the Queen, who wore deep mourning, and dispensed with the regalia, did not deliver her own speech in the musical voice which in old days had charmed her audiences, but merely handed it to be read by the Lord Chancellor. I went through my formal presentation to Her Majesty, before one of the Drawing Rooms, kneeling down to kiss her hand before she took up her position in front of the throne; but I was almost more impressed by seeing, as I stood behind her, first the Provost, and then the Head Master, of Eton, in their cassocks and bands, eclipsing as they did in importance, at least to my eyes, the Cabinet Ministers and great dignitaries of the State, pass one after another before her to make their solemn bows. A somewhat curious incident arose in connection with Court ceremonial, when Mr. Gladstone succeeded Lord Derby early in 1870. His Cabinet included John Bright, a politician then regarded by Conservative society as a dangerous person, owing, principally, to his attacks on the Crimean War, and his sympathy, based largely on Quaker and anti-slavery grounds, for the Northern against the Southern States of the American Union. Mere political differences could probably have been easily arranged, but Bright as a Quaker regarded it as inconsistent with the theological principles of his sect that he should wear a gorgeous Privy Councillor's uniform, and what was still worse in Quaker eyes, should carry, although sheathed, a sword. The difficulty was, I believe, happily settled by a Royal decision that Mr. Bright should, instead of displaying a sword, permit a harmless cane to replace that murderous weapon, which

was of course duly carried out. The principles of the Society of Friends were thus reconciled with the Palace etiquette, and the cane was concealed from the general view by a scabbard, if I recollect, of dark or subfusc colour.

I had begun my experiences at Eton in January, 1872, when I was just twelve years and three months old, and had been placed in the Upper Middle Fourth. My tutor and House Master was Mr. George Eden Marindin. He was a brilliant classical scholar, a former fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and he taught me both Latin and Greek composition, original and in the form of translation, in prose and verse alike, with marvellous instructive power. Unfortunately, I was stupid at arithmetic, and this kept me back a term, or, as Etonians say, 'a half' longer in the Upper Fourth Form, whose master, the Rev. J. Durnford, a very kindly but rather irritable old gentleman, used his right as Lower Master to flog his boys without giving their tutor an occasion to intercede for them. He enforced the cuts inflicted with Biblical quotations, his favourite one being the text 'Judgments are for scorners, and stripes for the backs of fools.' His whippings were a good deal less unpleasant than those of the Head Master for the boys who sat on the box containing the rods often managed, where a friend was concerned, to break off the hard buds which inflicted a somewhat sharp pang when they cut into the victim's naked skin. I fancy that the use of the birch, especially for minor offences, has a good deal diminished nowadays; in my time, I should say on an average four or five boys at least underwent it at noon every day. I once myself escaped it altogether, amidst a crowd of fellow-sufferers, when I was already in the Fifth Form. I had got leave to go home for the week-

end, and when I went up for my birching I found such a large batch of victims, already preparing for the operation, that I feared that, if I waited my turn, I should miss my train. On my return, I fully anticipated a painful explanation, and a still more painful interview with the Head Master, but I was greatly relieved at finding that he had forgotten all about me, and I saw no need to play the part of Regulus.

In the Remove I was 'up to' my tutor, which was in itself a pleasure, and his teaching enabled me to take a double, as it was called, into the Lower Fifth Form, thus passing out of the menial servitude of fagging into the freedom appertaining to 'Upper boys.' I myself, although an untidy valet and an absolutely poisonous cook, had on the whole had a kindly fag-master, Nugee Major, then captain of our house, and, afterwards, I believe, a successful clergyman. He only became really fierce when I scraped with a dirty knife, after blackening it by too close a contact with the fire, the toast on which I had to spread his butter, and he administered poetic justice by whacking, but never really badly hurting me, with the actual toasting fork which had served as the instrument of my crime. Another punishment, in some ways more severe, for bad fags, was to have to devour in the presence of their fag-master their own horrible culinary productions. I was several times threatened, I think quite deservedly, with this, but I escaped it and with it the stomach-ache which might have proved its result.

In the Fifth Form I was very fortunate with all my teachers, among whom Mr. Oscar Browning, Mr. F. Warre Cornish and Mr. E. D. Stone were those whom, after my own tutor, I liked best. I became a fairly good classical scholar, and thus acquired indirect popularity by doing verses and prose compositions for

many of my friends, who, however, always stipulated that I should insert in them an occasional 'howler,' so as to suggest the misleading impression that these productions were really their own. I got to love nearly all the classical writers for their own sakes, my favourites being Æschylus and Thucydides. I closed my career just outside the Sixth Form in the first hundred, into which I passed first in trials, and where I came under the direct rule of Dr. Hornby, the most dignified and urbane of Head Masters. Although I competed unsuccessfully for the Newcastle scholarship, and was not even one of the select, I succeeded in winning a few of the great prizes, including, as a reward of my studies at Hyères, the Prince Consort's for French. I was never, largely owing to my bad sight, a good cricketer, and though a 'wet bob,' a lover of the river and a very good swimmer, I was not, I think, deemed muscular enough to become a good oarsman, or to win a place in the Boats.

In October, 1875, I was sent up from Eton, by my tutor, to try for the Balliol scholarship, but although I failed to win it, I was told I had done well enough to be admitted as an Undergraduate of the College, without any further examination. I entered into residence and was given rooms in College a year later. My life at Oxford, apart from its greater freedom, was in some ways even pleasanter than at Eton; for my weakness at games and athletics, due in part to my short sight, which has handicapped me throughout my life, placed a boy at a greater disadvantage in a public school than it did a young man at a University. I had already developed at Eton a keen interest in politics, and more especially in Foreign affairs, and I plunged with ardour into the discussions of our College debating society, the 'Devorguilla,' of the

Union, of which I became the Secretary, and of the 'Canning,' a Tory academic club, whose annual banquets were frequently honoured by the presence of distinguished politicians from London. It had been founded by Auberon Herbert, a brilliant if somewhat eccentric brother of the fourth Earl of Carnarvon, who afterwards became an extreme Radical, and who had assigned to it, as its motto, the reactionary and not very grammatical pentameter:

'Sceptra fide; frenis plebs eget; ara metu.'

Its leading light was George Curzon, later Lord Curzon of Kedleston, an Etonian Undergraduate of Balliol like myself. It held weekly meetings in the rooms of its various members, at which an essay or paper on some political question of the day was read, and was followed by a general discussion. The Liberals had a similar club of their own called 'The Palmerston'; and there was a third one, also Conservative, known as the 'Chatham,' which combined with ours at a yearly dinner, often graced by the presence of distinguished politicians from London.

At the end of my first term at Balliol, I went out to spend Christmas with my mother and sisters who, my father being absent on duty in India, were wintering at Arcachon. Being so near Spain, I could not resist the temptation of exploring it, and I wandered first to Burgos, then to Madrid, Cordova, and Seville, where I saw the young King Alphonso XII and his beautiful Queen Mercedes acclaimed at the theatre, and finally to Cadiz and Gibraltar. Thence I crossed the straits to Tangier, and rode by way of Tetuan to Ceuta. Reembarking at Gibraltar, I stayed a night at Lisbon, where I was most hospitably welcomed by our Minister, Sir Robert Morier, under whom I was afterwards

to serve, and who was himself an enthusiastic son of Balliol, and a warm friend of our famous Master, Jowett.

I need not dwell on a tour to such familiar scenes as the great cities and natural beauties of the Peninsula. Oddly enough the place which left upon my mind the most vivid impression was Ceuta. I had ridden into it from Tetuan with a Moorish guide, and on entering the inn, I found its inmates sitting down to luncheon at the *table d'hôte*. They scrutinized me with more interest than that usually aroused by the arrival of a commonplace traveller, and one of them, near whom I sat, asked me in French, for I then knew no Spanish, whence I had come, and how long I proposed to stay. On my replying that I intended starting on the following morning for Gibraltar, he observed, 'Ah, then you are not one of us,' and he proceeded to explain in a subdued tone that all the gentlemen at the table, himself included, and even the servants who waited on them, were involuntary guests. In other words, they were convicts, condemned to detention in the fortress for various criminal offences. The hotel, in which the Governor had an interest and shares, was, he said, most expensive; but well-behaved convicts, who could afford to pay its prices, and poorer ones willing to work gratis as waiters or household servants, were permitted to reside there, thus escaping the squalor and discomforts of the common unsanitary jail. Some of the prisoners were men of good social position. My friend pointed out a stout gentleman facing us, and whispered something about his having been a cashier at a great Madrid bank, from which a large quantity of bullion and notes had suddenly and mysteriously found their way into one of his trunks. Encouraged by these confidences, I asked him what

disgraceful miscarriage of justice was the cause of his own imprisonment at Ceuta. He replied proudly: 'A patriotic love of freedom and of my country.' He was, he said, a native of Cuba, who, inspired by the memories of Washington, of Bolivar, and of Garibaldi, had taken up arms against her Spanish tyrants, but he hoped for an early amnesty, in connection with the King's approaching marriage, which would be extended to all political offenders. He offered, after dinner, to take me to a prisoners' club, where he and others spent the evenings, but he hinted that it might be wiser, for obvious reasons on which I would excuse his dwelling, to avoid playing cards indiscriminately with the members, some of whom, he said, were 'apt to be careless.' I asked him if any prisoners escaped into Morocco; he said a few had done so, but they were subjected, unless they became Mohammedans, to such cruel treatment – in fact practical slavery – by the Moors, that the worst jail in Christendom was far more endurable. Curiously enough, many years later, General Jordana, when I stayed with him at Melilla, confirmed this statement, in so far as it affected deserters from the Spanish garrisons and other forces.

One result of this tour was that on my return to Oxford I began to study Spanish. My instructor was an aged and learned Spanish priest who, perhaps under the influence of some later Borrow, had gone over to the Church of England, and been appointed a Canon of Gibraltar. He was a kindly man and a good teacher, and from my studies with him dates my love of the Spanish language, as well as of the geography and history of the Iberian Peninsula. I took it up when I competed for the Foreign Office; but my recollection both of my papers and of my *viva voce* is that both were decidedly poor.

I am afraid that all these new interests rather tended to divert my attention from my Greek and Latin studies, for I disappointed my tutors at Balliol, Mr. Abbott and Mr. Paravicini, by only winning a second class in Classical Honour Moderations, mainly owing to a stupid misunderstanding about hours, which led me to stay away altogether from one of the papers. I found, however, consolation for this mishap by winning the Lothian prize – the subject was 'the life and reign of Queen Christina of Sweden,' and for it I prepared myself by a tour in Scandinavia, traversing the Cimbric Peninsula from Hamburg to Aarhus, then crossing the Danish islands to Copenhagen and Elsinore, and visiting Stockholm, Upsala, and Christiania. My travelling companion was an old Eton schoolfellow, John Birkbeck, of Magdalen College, Oxford, at whose Norfolk home I had frequently stayed during my holidays, and with whom my own lifelong friendship only ended a few years ago on his sudden death. This Scandinavian expedition we followed up, in the following summer, by a journey to another ancient Norse dominion, Iceland. We traversed the island on sturdy ponies from Akureyri in the north to Thingwalla in the south, turned eastwards to the Geysers and to Skalholt, then climbed to the top of Mount Hecla. After making our ponies swim a river, while we ourselves crossed in a boat, we rode thence by the track which, passing Reykir, connects south-eastern Iceland with its village capital Reykjavik, or, to anglicize it, ' Reekwick' (village of smoke). This tour was one of a very varied interest, more especially the part of it which involved the crossing at its western end of the great central desert of Iceland, from Grimstungur to Kalmanstunga, a ride of about seventy miles, across a wild, utterly desolate country,

dotted here and there with ice-crowned jökulls and extinct volcanic mountains. Luckily in July there was practically no night, so we could ride without reference to the time of day. We slept sometimes in solitary farms, or byres, sometimes in the mostly wooden churches, or in the parsonages of hospitable and Latin-speaking Lutheran priests, whose pronunciation and phraseology sounded strange to our Oxonian ears. One of our reverend hosts, on our asking his opinion as to weather prospects, indulged in a super-superlative, 'Hodie,' he said, pronouncing the *p* like an *f*, 'tempus habetis oftissimum'; but when it came to more serious conversations, I realized how great was the disadvantage of not fluently speaking, as well as writing, Latin.

After a month's wanderings amidst the wondrous if somewhat grim scenery of Iceland, often eating excellent salmon, trout, and sweet dishes made of rich creams, we landed in our own island at Thurso, and returned through Inverness and the famous Pass of Killiecrankie to Edinburgh, and eventually to Oxford. This was my only visit to Ultima Thule, but Birkbeck went back there later, and explored the Isafiord region, in the extreme north-west of the island. It was, I think, on this occasion that he brought back to Norfolk an Iceland pony, and a black Iceland dog. The dog flourished; but the pony's life in England was short. Accustomed in winter to subsist, like so many of its fellows, on dried stock-fish, it was unable to resist the rich green herbage of a Norfolk meadow, and it devoured, without stopping, so much grass that it died in a few days of sheer repletion.

On my return, I began at Oxford to read for the Honour School of History, of which Dr. Stubbs, afterwards Bishop of Chester and then of Oxford, was professor. I knew him slightly, for he was college

chaplain at Balliol, and his constitutional history, illustrated as it was by his Charters, was for a long time one of my constant studies. Under a solemn, rather heavy exterior, he concealed a great fund of wit and humour; and he addressed an amusing poem to Dr. Gore, then Canon of Christchurch, protesting against his being 'invited' to the Christchurch Common-room. He had a right of his own already, as Bishop of the Diocese, to make use of it. The poem ended with the lines:

'In the house I'm at home,
As the Pope is in Rome,
For I'm the old man of the See, dear Gore,
I'm the old man of the See.'

Nor were his jokes confined to dons and students. While visiting his diocese, he asked the children at a village school what book, in their opinion, a Bishop was most frequently required to read. There was a long pause. 'Come,' he said, 'let me help you. It begins with a B.' 'I know, my lord,' cried the sharp boy of the class, raising his hand, 'the Bible.' 'Wrong, my boy,' said Stubbs, 'try again. If you can't think, I will tell you myself. It is called Bradshaw's Railway Guide; for my days are mostly spent in trains.'

Froude I only heard rarely, and never Freeman, though I met the latter at dinner from time to time; but I learnt a great deal of constitutional and political history from that distinguished Master of Balliol, Lionel Smith. For the foreign and diplomatic history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which was beginning to fascinate me, I attended the lectures of the Rev. Frank Bright, Master of University College and author of an excellent history of England; as also

those of Canon Kitchen, afterwards Dean of Durham and of Winchester.

My final schools were fixed for the autumn of 1880, but I had for a time to leave Oxford at the beginning of the long vacation, for early in April the Conservative Government, which had held office since 1874, resigned. Lord Salisbury, however, was its Foreign Secretary, and was able before its resignation to offer me a nomination to compete for the Foreign Office. This meant that I must in about a month's time present myself for a competitive examination before the Civil Service Commissioners. I felt confident that I could answer most of the papers, except the one on Mathematics, in which I had always, even when a boy at Eton, and a candidate for Responsions at Oxford, been weak. By the advice of the Mathematical tutor at Balliol, Mr. Russell, I coached with an elementary schoolmaster in St. Giles' parish, Mr. Linstead. My worthy teacher formed, I fear, a very low estimate of my capacity, for when, a year later, I was elected to a Fellowship at All Souls', he asked me if this report were really true, and his undisguised astonishment, when I answered that it was, revealed only too plainly what was passing in his mind.

Early in July, soon after the end of the summer term, I began my official work in Downing Street. I was placed in the Turkish, or Eastern, Department, of which Sir Philip Currie, afterwards Ambassador at Rome and at Constantinople, was the head, and Mr. Francis Bertie (afterwards Lord Bertie of Thame and Ambassador at Rome and at Paris), his second in command. The department was divided into three spacious rooms, each opening into each other. The 'lowest room,' in the Biblical sense of the term, was occupied by junior Foreign Office clerks and diplo-

matic attachés or third secretaries. Their duties were largely mechanical, but at the same time confidential. Their working day began at about 11.30, and lasted nine hours, or up to about half-past eight, when it closed with the delivery to the Queen's messengers at Charing Cross of the sealed bags, destined, on alternate days, for the various capitals of the Balkan Peninsula, for Russia, Egypt, and Barbary, and once a month for Persia. A large portion of our time was spent in deciphering telegrams.

In the second room, where Mr. Bertie sat, dispatches and other confidential documents were perused and minuted by him, and after approval of his suggestions by Mr. Currie, were sent up to the Permanent Secretary of State, at that time Lord Tenterden, and thence, with the opinion of the latter written on them, to the Foreign Minister, Lord Granville himself. At a little before eight, the Foreign Office bags conveying all these instructions and replies were sealed up in our room before being dispatched to Charing Cross. Once the Foreign Office bag had been disposed of at about 8.30, I was free to return to the lodgings in Eaton Terrace which I shared with two of my first cousins, Henry and Arthur Cunynghame, both of them incipient lawyers, the one a rising barrister, who had achieved distinction at Wellington, at St. John's College, Cambridge, and at Woolwich; and the other learning the work of a solicitor in a firm long employed by my mother's family, with an office in Lincoln's Inn Fields. In these lodgings I burned the midnight oil every night, working for my final honour schools.

In October, when the Oxford long vacation ended, I obtained from the Foreign Office permission to return for a term to Balliol, in order to pass my Final

schools. I had not been there long when the Master, the celebrated Regius Professor of Greek, Benjamin Jowett, a famous classical scholar and philosopher, a divine of advanced Broad Church views, and withal a shrewd man of the world, holding moderate Liberal opinions on politics, sent word to me that he wished to see me. 'You have worked hard,' he said, 'at the Foreign Office, for the best part of four or five months; you are run down, and require more bracing air than you get in our damp relaxing Oxford climate. If you are to win a first class in the Schools, I have a country house at the top of the Malvern Hills: go there for three weeks or so, until just before your Honour Schools examination. My servants will look after you: read half the day, but not too much, and take plenty of long walks in the bracing country air, which will insure your sleeping well at night. Don't come back to Oxford until your examination begins in December. You will find that my prescription, if only you will follow it, will insure your complete success.' I need hardly say that I followed to the letter the advice of this most kindly and hospitable of Masters. I returned from Malvern much fresher and more active, and was complimented at my *vivâ voce* by the examiners, of whom the chief was Dean Kitchin of Winchester and Durham. I was rewarded beyond my highest hopes by obtaining a first class, which led, a year later, to a Fellowship at All Souls' College. I can never forget Jowett's kindness; beneath the somewhat dry and shy manner, which often tended to make timid pupils even shyer than himself, he concealed what the French called *un cœur d'or*. To him I am indebted for the successful close of my University career, and for that long connection with All Souls' College which has been one of the chief interests of my life. With me was elected, to

the same foundation, a brother Etonian, Charles Robert Leslie Fletcher, a King's scholar at Eton, and a Demy of Magdalen, Oxford, who soon afterwards married the charming daughter of Dr. Merry, Public Orator and Rector of Lincoln College, and settled down with her for life as an Oxford Don.

When I first went into residence at All Souls', a duty which I was able to combine with my Foreign Office work, since my College obligations could be practically complied with by week-end visits to Oxford for a year or so – not a costly charge since my Fellowship was worth £200 a year, with rooms in College, Hall dinners and 'battels' free – the ancient foundation of Archbishop Chichele and King Henry VI was passing through a new phase in its long history. One of those numerous Royal Commissions which have frequently but not always successfully endeavoured to modernize Oxford and Cambridge, and to bring them into harmony with the so-called spirit or spirits of the age – for these are, as the Bible says, legion – had just completed its doubtfully beneficial work. The successor to the deceased Warden Leighton, Sir William Anson, the first layman in its history to occupy that office, had just been elected by the Fellows after a contest whose issue had seemed for a few days uncertain. Anson, the brilliant author of *The Law and the Constitution*, though an orthodox Churchman, was politically a moderate Liberal. A great authority on the British Constitution, he sat afterwards for Oxford University as a Unionist, whilst his rival, Ernald Lane, a clergyman and a brother of my first cousin, was supported by the more Conservative elements in the College. Most of those, however, who voted against Anson would probably now admit that no Warden could have then been

found better fitted to guide and reshape the destinies, in a difficult time, of our ancient and somewhat anomalous foundation. His tact, his moderation, his patience with some of the juniors, his urbanity and devotion to the College traditions, had made him the ideal head of a society whose earlier constitution was often very bitterly attacked as inconsistent with the spirit of the age. All sorts of proposals had been made by various schools of academic innovators; some advocated converting the College into an ordinary, Undergraduate one; others, its conversion into a sort of appendage to the Bodleian Library. Almost all argued that the life tenure of Fellowships, so long as their owners were married, was an abuse, and that they ought, if viewed as prizes, to be made terminable, unless their holders took up academic work. My own diplomatic duties under the Foreign Office rendered this, generally speaking, impossible; but so far as I could do any work for the College, I welcomed any chance of serving it. Thus I acted as Examiner in Classics at Tonbridge School, which appointed, once a year, representatives from Oxford and Cambridge to conduct examinations for the numerous scholarships in its gift. I was afterwards agreeably rewarded by repeated invitations to splendid banquets in the picturesque Halls of its Governors, the Worshipful Company of Skinners.

When, later, I was appointed to Zanzibar, I was required to resign *propter profectionem in Libyam*, the Fellowship to which I had been re-elected, and I finally forfeited all hope of re-election on my marriage in the same year. A hospitable custom of the College has, however, long permitted former Fellows to visit their College as a temporary residence, and to dine, to breakfast, and to have the use of a valet and a

room there. I have rarely missed an opportunity at College Meetings for Elections or Commemorations, of revisiting scenes associated with the pleasantest memories of my youth.

In 1882, I was moved from the Eastern Department of the Foreign Office to the German one, which dealt with the affairs of Central and Northern Europe, to wit, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, the Low Countries and the three Scandinavian kingdoms. Its head was Sir Percy Anderson, an able and a very kindly man, with whom I had afterwards a good deal to do in Africa. But my immediate superior was Mr. Stephen, known as 'Beauty Stephen' from his good looks and faultless dress. He was a very kindly and pleasant chief, and did not mind telling stories against himself. One of these turned on an audience with the Pope (Pius IX) which he had at Rome – for he was a devout Catholic. He asked an English friend, also a Catholic, what was the proper way to address the supreme Pontiff, and was told that, in their conversation, which would naturally be couched in French, he should always call him 'Holy Father.' On returning from his audience, he was asked by a friend how it had gone off. He replied that 'The Pope had been exceedingly amiable and gracious, but what,' he added, 'rather puzzled me was that the eyes of His Holiness twinkled, and he seemed to be trying to suppress a laugh whenever I alluded to him in French as Holy Father.' 'And how did you actually address him?' continued his friend. 'Why, of course,' replied Stephen, emphasizing the reverential adjective, 'as Sacré Père, and although it was of course quite correct, it seemed, oddly enough, every time that I employed it, to cause him irrepressible amusement.'

During the period of my service in the German

Department, Prince Bismarck was watching with keen satisfaction the development of jealousies between France and England in Egypt, as the result of French reluctance to participate in the suppression of Arabi's rebellion. This was due largely to the ever-present French fear of a German attack, should she make any move in this direction.

When the Nationalist resistance collapsed at Tel-el-Kebir, and the dual control came to an end, Count Herbert Bismarck, whom his father had sent on a special mission to England, strongly urged not merely the abolition of the Anglo-French condominium, but the establishment of a British Protectorate over Egypt. This, Lord Granville quite wisely would not hear of, and Bismarck's failure to separate France and England took the form of a flirtation with the new French policy of Colonial expansion and aggrandisement. One effect of this policy of Jules Ferry, following on the British occupation of Egypt, was undoubtedly to create strained relations between France and England, and thus to further the German game. Although Lord Granville was considered too slow and timid, he was doubtless wise in letting events quietly develop. To me, personally, he was always very kind; he invited me to stay with him at Walmer, and both he and Lady Granville, who had at that moment several interesting foreign guests, made my visit to him exceptionally agreeable. We rode over the downs in the afternoon, and played chess, of which he was a master, with his able and agreeable Private Secretary, who was afterwards to be raised to the peerage as Lord Sanderson.

Although I was a junior in the Foreign Office, I was anxious to go abroad, if only for a time, in order to see something of foreign diplomatic life. I had qualified in International Law, a circumstance which raised

my salary to £250, in addition to my £200 a year from All Souls'. I had, however, no special reason for desiring to stay on in England; my father was Commander-in-Chief at Bombay, and my mother and sisters were temporarily living in the south of France. My own wish was to go to Athens, for I was still full of classical enthusiasm, and I longed to see the historic sites of ancient Greece. I tried to effect an exchange with a friend in the Foreign Office, albeit really a diplomatist, Lord Frederick Hamilton, a younger son of the then Duke of Abercorn, and in some respects one of the most amusing persons I ever met. He had, I believe, distinguished himself, during Lord Derby's tenure of the Foreign Office, by his somewhat original method of dealing with two rival officials, somewhere out in Indo-China. One of them was a Consul-General, and the other, I think, a Vice-Consul. Both had given considerable trouble in several Departments by the letters which each wrote against the other, and Hamilton, who had had to wade through these tedious controversies, lost his temper and would not read their letters. He determined, however, to put an end to the unedifying conflict by chivalrously espousing the cause of the subordinate, whose epistles were moreover less lengthy than those of his hated superior. He accordingly wrote out with his own hand a dispatch in which the Vice-Consul was instructed to 'remove from the possession of the Consul-General all pens, ink and other writing materials, and, if these measures should fail to prevent His Majesty's Consul-General from continuing the discussion, you are hereby instructed to immerse that officer in a deep part of the Indian Ocean.' This instruction, carefully copied out by Hamilton, went with a pile of others to Lord Derby, in his capacity as Secretary of State, and was signed

by him unread together with all the other papers. At the last moment, after they had been put into the Foreign Office bag, the dispatches were reopened for the insertion of a further letter on a totally different subject. Their perusal revealed the strange instruction in Hamilton's writing which Lord Derby had signed and its transmission was thus prevented.

Some years afterwards, Hamilton stood, in I think 1885, for Manchester or one of its suburbs, against the Radical, Jacob Bright, and on being asked by a heckler what, if anything, he himself had done for the commerce of Lancashire, he coolly answered, 'A share in the negotiation of the Congo Treaty,' which he had, as a matter of fact, merely copied when a secretary, some years earlier, at Lisbon. This he endeavoured to represent to his audience as solely due to his own far-seeing policy and zeal for the commercial interests of Manchester.

He was now very anxious to remain at the Foreign Office, and I asked the Under-Secretary of State, Sir Julian Pauncefote, if I could effect an exchange with him at Athens. This arrangement never materialized, but a few months later, a young Secretary named Oswald, who was then on duty in Spain, desired a move to London. Sir Robert Morier, who was then our Minister at Madrid, and whose acquaintance I had made at Lisbon, very kindly consented to my transfer to his staff.

CHAPTER II

SPAIN

My new chief, Sir Robert Morier, who had hospitably received me at his Legation in Lisbon, when, as a young Balliol undergraduate, I had wandered through the Iberian Peninsula, was one of the most remarkable personalities in the English Diplomatic Service. Like my wife's Labouchere family, he was descended from Huguenot victims of the bigotry of Louis XIV; they migrated, however, not to England but to Switzerland. One of them, Isaac Morier, moved still farther afield, to Smyrna, and married Clara van Lennap, daughter of the Dutch Consul-General and President of the Dutch Levant Commercial Company, a girl, so his descendant Lady Wemyss tells us, in an interesting book, of ability and remarkable beauty. Two of the sons born of their marriage went into the English Diplomatic Service, the second of them, who had served at Tehran, being the author of the amusing tale known as the *Adventures of Hajji Baba*, the autobiography of an unscrupulous Persian jack-of-all-trades. The highest tribute ever paid to the brilliancy of this witty book, as a picture of Persian life and manners, was a remark made after he had read it by Nasraddin Shah. 'I cannot understand,' observed His Majesty, 'why all you English talk so much about a story which merely records the familiar everyday experiences of an ordinary Persian adventurer, who moreover invariably acts and talks in the most vulgar and commonplace Persian fashion.'

The diplomatic duties which absorbed David Morier, when, as Consul-General at Paris, he was employed in aiding Castlereagh and Wellington to complete the

Treaties of 1815, were so skilfully performed that he was rewarded in 1832 by being sent as Envoy to the Swiss Confederation, an appointment which he held until 1847.

His son, my own chief, Robert Burnett Morier, went to Balliol. After taking a second class in 'Greats' he travelled in Germany and the then Danish 'Duchies,' at that time in arms against the 'Eider Dane' Constitution of King Frederick VII. His personal sympathies in regard to this struggle were and long remained German rather than Danish. For a time he held a clerkship in the Privy Council office; but found more congenial employment in 1853 as unpaid Attaché at Vienna. Here he laid the foundation of a knowledge of German affairs unequalled by any of the diplomatists of his day. His voluminous reports on the complex politics of the Frankfurt Diet, of the 'Gross Deutsch' and 'Klein Deutsch' ideals, and of the Slav and Magyar problems in the new German regions of the Austrian Empire, were, so it was said at the British Foreign Office, of the most exhaustive and interesting character, and commended him to the Queen and the Prince Consort; but some of the 'old stagers' in Downing Street were said to have warned him that he wrote and knew too much, and that if he really wished to get on, he must not dwell too fully 'on the politics of Hesse-Cassel and Hesse-Darmstadt, Saxe-Weimar, Saxe-Meiningen and Saxe-Coburg.' During the Dano-German war, he visited the scenes of the military operations, and he told me that the firing of the artillery and the spectacle of dead and wounded soldiers produced much less effect upon him than he had at first expected. They seemed, so to speak, just a part of a great absorbing dramatic performance: but when a farmer, dressed in ordinary clothes and driving

a team of horses quite close to the battlefield, was suddenly killed by a cannon-ball, the sight very nearly made him sick.

He then served as a Secretary both at Vienna and Berlin and won golden opinions from his chiefs at both capitals.

Morier's first independent post was that of Frankfurt, where he was sent during the Seven Weeks' War between Austria and Prussia in the summer of 1866, to relieve Sir Alexander Malet; for the Prussians, having overrun Hanover and Electoral Hesse, were about to occupy the Federal city. His own views as to the Austro-Prussian War, as explained to Lady Salisbury, in a letter from Vienna dated June 26, was that an Austrian victory would be a misfortune; for 'Austria's wisest course would be withdrawal both from Italy and Germany, instead of which she had been for the last fifty years playing with the dream of a new Holy Roman Empire, extending from the Eider to Brindisi, forgetful of the fact that the days of Charlemagne had passed away, never to return.'

As the Prussian army drew near to Frankfurt, Sir Alexander Malet and the other diplomatists accredited to the Bund retired to Augsburg in Bavaria, bearing with them in a large wooden box – a kind of Teutonic Ark of the Covenant – the ancient archives of the Germanic body, which was solemnly consigned to the luggage van. The population of Frankfurt had been, during the brief war, pro-Austrian and therefore anti-Prussian. The Federal officials and diplomatists and the wealthy merchants who composed its society, encouraged their daughters to dance at balls with the smarter and more affable Austrian officers, rather than with the stiff and less polished Junkers from Berlin. Fears were entertained that the Prussian general to be

placed in charge of the ancient 'free city' might treat its population somewhat harshly. On the day after Morier's arrival, the Prussian army was to enter and occupy Frankfurt. Lady Malet had long been a champion of the 'Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals,' and she suggested to him that he should drive out with her and her maid to the entrance of the town, through which the invaders were to march, and that, on their arrival there, they should, from their carriage, distribute to each Prussian soldier a copy of a pamphlet composed by herself and entitled *Das Pferd, wie man es behalten soll* (The Horse and how one should treat him). Morier doubted the expediency and propriety of this course, and hinted that Sir Alexander Malet might not altogether approve of it, but he was answered by Lady Malet that the cause of friendship to dumb animals was as dear to her husband as to herself, and that if Morier was unwilling to attend and support her, she would drive out alone with her maid, till they met the invading Prussian host. He could not, of course, allow her to do this, and they all proceeded, with this mighty mass of hippophile pamphlets. One was presented to each soldier as the conquering regiments tramped in: for the Prussian officers had recognized the coach of the British Legation and were careful to treat it with respect.

The Prussian troops, if I remember rightly, remained within the city for several days, if not longer, during which their behaviour was exemplary. On the day which preceded their departure, their officers decided to punish Frankfurt in a fashion which its citizens would not easily forget, for its Austrophile and anti-Prussian proclivities. The private houses in which the men had been billeted were suddenly attacked with savage brutality. The handsome furniture of the rich

Frankfurt burghers, their pictures and works of art, were smashed to pieces ; the luxurious drawing-rooms and bedrooms were systematically subjected to indescribable defilement, not unlike that inflicted in the Great War upon French and Belgian houses and even churches. But worst of all, in defiance of the appeal contained in Lady Malet's pamphlets, several small high-bred ponies for children, belonging to one of the Frankfurt Rothschilds, were gravely requisitioned by the Prussian commanding officer and made to drag heavy artillery, which, when they tried to move, broke their feeble little backs. This distressed her more than any of the other of the painful incidents of which she had been a horrified spectator, for it proved only too plainly that her laborious distribution of piles of literature about the 'kindly treatment of the horse' had been undertaken in vain.

The cold, calculated brutalities inflicted on the Washington of Germany, the peaceful scene of the coronation of so many Roman Cæsars, was not merely vindictive. It was meant as a lesson to the other free Imperial cities of Germany. Morier made vigorous representations to the Prussian authorities, and these, which proved successful in preventing the Prussians from levying blackmail upon Frankfurt, were warmly approved by Lord Stanley, the future Earl of Derby in the Conservative Government of 1874.

He was shortly afterwards transferred as Chargé d'Affaires to Darmstadt, then governed by Grand Duke Louis IV, the husband of Princess Alice of England, and thus a son-in-law of Queen Victoria.

Sir Robert Morier stayed in Darmstadt for seven years, and when the Franco-German War broke out (in 1870) he accompanied the Grand Duke Louis to the

French frontier. Lady Morier, a daughter of Sir Jonathan Peel, one of the then unbending Tories who resigned office in 1866 rather than accept Disraeli's Household Suffrage Bill, ministered to the needs of the wounded, both German and French, in the Hessian hospitals. I remember Sir Robert telling me a story which illustrated the marvellous German preparations for war. Three railway bridges then crossed the Rhine, at a point some distance south of Metz, and he noticed with surprise that, whereas trains full of soldiers were continually traversing the northernmost and the southernmost of these bridges, the central bridge, situated between them, seemed to be never employed for the passage of German troops. On his asking for an explanation of this curious circumstance, he was told that the central bridge had been only recently built, and that some time before its erection all the most minute details of the German plan for the invasion of France had been settled by the Berlin staff. To use it would be to involve a complete revision of the scheme of attack, and it was accordingly decided to assume its non-existence, just as though it had never been built.

Notwithstanding his own strong German sympathies Morier was disliked and distrusted by Bismarck, who suspected the independence of his character and his intimate acquaintance with German politics; and he thereupon accepted in 1870 the post long filled by Odo Russell, as British Minister or Agent at the Papal Court. Queen Victoria, however, was bent upon keeping him in Germany, on account of his intimate acquaintance with German politics, and her prescience was fully justified: for in 1873 Prince Bismarck arrived at the conclusion that France, which within the year had paid up her heavy indemnity, had thus proved that she was

not fully crushed. Morier had in the meantime been transferred (in 1873) to Munich. He was able there to render highly valuable service, not merely to his own country, but also to the general peace of Europe. For Bismarck, who had initiated the anti-Catholic campaign or 'Kulturkampf' in Prussia, had deemed it convenient to pick a quarrel with the Ultra-clerical government of Brussels, then presided over by M. Deschamps, as abetting Ultramontane hostility to Germany. He had indeed worked out a scheme for partitioning Belgium between France and Holland, as a compensation to the French for the recent loss of Alsace and Lorraine. He was, moreover, confident that the British Government would be unable, when confronted by so powerful a combination, to protect the independence and neutrality secured to Belgium by the public law of Europe.

Just as this scheme was beginning to mature, the German Emperor had arranged to pay an official visit to the King of Italy. The visit was suddenly suspended: or rather the German Crown Prince and Princess were substituted for the Emperor William. Morier, who had seen them on their way to Rome, had a still more important meeting with them, on their homeward journey, at Innsbruck. He succeeded in enlisting both the sympathies and the reason of the German Heir-Apparent in the cause of European tranquillity. The success thus achieved was completed by a letter from Queen Victoria to the Emperor Alexander II of Russia, whose support against these warlike plans she secured by a private intimation that no German attack upon France would be permitted by Russia or Great Britain. Bismarck never forgave Morier for his active share in these negotiations, and indeed regarded him henceforth with bitter hatred.

Lord Derby, who entertained a high opinion of his abilities, appointed him a Knight Commander of the Bath, and in 1875 British Minister at Lisbon, in succession to Lord Lytton, whom Disraeli had just selected for the Viceroyalty of India. At his new post he negotiated, amongst other valuable services, an all-important treaty by which Portugal consented to transfer to Great Britain the important harbour known as Delagoa Bay. The Bill authorizing this action passed both Houses in the Portuguese Cortes. It was warmly approved by the British Conservative Cabinet, but when that Cabinet fell, Lord Kimberley, the new Liberal Minister for the Colonies – presumably influenced by the characteristic Liberal dislike for new Colonial commitments – declined to recommend its acceptance by the Queen. Had she ratified it, the bloody South African War of 1899–1902 might have been avoided or greatly shortened. With Delagoa Bay in our hands, the Boers could not have been supplied or supported from the sea, and their resistance would have rapidly collapsed. 'Most hateful of all sufferings is to know what is useful and not be able to accomplish it.' The decision to abandon the invaluable advantage which Morier's patient and skilful diplomacy had secured for England was one of the bitterest experiences of his life, what a great Greek writer once described as the *'Εχθιστὴ ἁπασῶν ὀδυνὴ πόλλα φρονέοντα μὴδενος κρατεειν*, for notwithstanding the foreign strain in his blood, which helped to widen and diversify his outlook, hè was, both in appearance and in character, a thoroughly typical Briton. In English politics he was a Whig and a strong Free Trader, but although a leading member of the Cobden Club, his sturdy British patriotism recoiled from the trivial foreign policy pursued by the Gladstone Government of 1880,

which, when I first served under him, was still in power. He believed, and did not hesitate to assert his opinion, in a good understanding with Russia, based on a fair division of our respective spheres and interests in Asia, and the knowledge that this was his opinion enhanced the dislike and distrust with which Bismarck had long regarded him.

His Secretary of Legation was Mr. Fane, of Boyton Court in Wiltshire, whose wife was a distant connection of my own, and with whom I was once more to serve some years later in our Embassy at Pera. The head of our Chancery, Mr. Langley, had a brother in the Foreign Office, and was soon afterwards succeeded by Mr. (now Sir Maurice) de Bunsen, a grandson of the famous German diplomatist of that name, and my own predecessor many years later, after it had been raised to the rank of an Embassy, at Madrid. As Consul we had an agreeable and cultivated Scotsman, named Macpherson, who had married a Spanish lady and had himself a strain of Spanish blood. He was an enthusiastic votary of Shakespeare, many of whose plays he had translated into Spanish; and this taste was happily shared by a high official of the Spanish Board of Trade, with whom he could do almost anything by appealing to their common love of the great English dramatist. Thus, when on one occasion the port authorities at Bilbao stopped, on the plea of cholera in England and elsewhere, the entry of foreign ships into that port, Macpherson demanded and obtained from him a relaxation of the order, on behalf of 'a mere handful of vessels carrying healthy compatriots of Shakespeare.' A few hours later he was summoned by his friend, with a complaint that within the last few hours some forty British ships had been given pratique and the Consuls of the other Powers were loud in their complaints

against the unjust violation of the rule of most favoured nation treatment.

The diplomatic body at Madrid had as its ex-officio Dean, or President, the Papal Nuncio Archbishop Rampolla, a somewhat celebrated prelate, inasmuch as his election to the Papacy was prevented, after the death of Leo XIII, on the ground of his alleged Francophile sympathies by the threatened exercise of the Austrian veto. He was a man of dignified and charming manners, which recalled to some extent those of Canon Liddon, and I took a great liking to one of his Secretaries, Monsignor della Chiesa, a young man of my own age, with whom I used often to talk politics, both Spanish and Italian. In 1914 he was elected to the Papacy, under the title of Benedict XV, after the last great eighteenth-century Pontiff.

The only other Ambassador at Madrid was the French representative, Baron Desmichels, a somewhat imperious personage, who had been the hero of a violent scene with the Customs officials at Irun, when the latter, not realizing his diplomatic immunity from Customs duties, had attempted to open his baggage. Germany was represented by a dignified Minister, Count Solms; Italy by a dignified old Milanese gentleman, Count Greppi; Austria by Count Dubsky, a good-natured man with a love of emphatic contradiction, which led him, if some one said it was a fine day, to reply that he *never* remembered such bad weather; Russia by Prince Gortchakoff, the son of the Russian Chancellor, whose dignity as a Spanish grandee was inherited; the United States by General Harrison, who knew Mexico and spoke fluent Spanish with an American accent; and Turkey by Sermet Effendi, an amusing personage who had served as a Secretary at Stockholm. Being totally unused to alcohol he had suffered severely

from forced potations of Swedish punch, so much so that he admitted having suddenly collapsed on the floor in front of the Queen of Sweden. 'What,' I asked, 'did your Minister say to this mishap: did you not have an awkward interview with him?' 'No,' replied Sermet, 'most fortunately for me, a few minutes before my own mishap, he was borne downstairs to his carriage by the servants of the Palace, for the effect of the Swedish punch on him had been even more disastrous than on myself. He was in fact utterly helpless and swayed about, unable to keep his balance, or even to stand!'

When the Castilian summer became too oppressive, all these embassies migrated to La Granja, the village in the Guadarrama Mountains clustering round Philip V's royal palace of San Ildefénso, where the Spanish Court spent the hot weather. The palace itself is not striking, but the grounds and gardens with their artificial fountains, which played every Sunday, recalled the attempts of the first Bourbon sovereign of Spain to create a new miniature Versailles. At noon every morning, the King and his second wife, Queen Christina of Austria, walked up and down the gardens, and the foreign diplomatists joined them in a sort of official promenade which was known by the name of the Corro, and in the absence of regular Courts or Levées, this ceremony afforded an opportunity to the chiefs of the foreign missions to pay their respects to their Majesties and present to them new members of their staffs. There was, moreover, a nice little theatre at which plays were regularly acted, often in the presence of the Court, by performers who came for this purpose from Madrid.

A day or so after Sir Robert Morier and his staff had arrived at La Granja, a revolutionary meeting, instigated by the Republican leader, Signor Ruiz Zor-

rilla, broke out at Badajoz, and was followed by a similar revolt of the Numancia regiment in the Province of Soria, which lay only about forty miles to the north of La Granja itself. I myself learnt the news from the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires, Senhor de Soveral, who was afterwards for many years to represent his Government in London. On the day on which this news became public property, we were on the point of starting for a so-called 'Chocolaté' or afternoon picnic in the woods surrounding La Granja, at which the royal family were expected, and I went to inquire of Soveral about the distance and the best mode of covering it, and whether we could walk or must ride. 'Chocolaté,' he explained, 'mais, mon cher, vous ne savez donc pas les nouvelles qui viennent d'arriver au Palais – La Revolution vient d'éclater! La Reine et les Infantes sont en larmes: la fête champêtre dont vous parlez est contramandée: je crains fort que la lune de miel du Roi ne touche à sa fin. Il faut attendre pour le moment et espèrer que les choses n'en sent point encore là.'

This interview was the beginning of a long friendship between Soveral and myself, which lasted, on and off, until his death four years ago. He was at that moment said to be carrying on a flirtation with the Infanta Eulalia, the King's pretty younger sister, and he used, at the little theatre at La Granja, to be constantly gazing from the stalls at her graceful figure in the royal box. After this had gone on for some time, the King of Spain conceived that these unconcealed attentions to his sister on the part of the Portuguese diplomatist ought to be severely discouraged. He perhaps remembered that in his own veins ran the blood of another Spanish Princess, Queen Christina, the last wife of Ferdinand VII, who had, after her

husband's death, become the wife of another admirer not even of gentle blood, but an illiterate common soldier, Muñoz, whom, when Regent, she promoted to a Dukedom. I was told, indeed, at a much later date, that Alfonso XII used his influence at the Court of Lisbon to have Soveral transferred to Berlin. His cleverness, his genial good temper, and his varied social gifts obtained for him, here as afterwards in London, a position in the diplomatic body quite out of proportion to the influence and importance of his country.

A story common a little later at the German capital told how, after he had been there for some years, he received an invitation to dine with the Emperor William I, as one of a small, intimate and indeed almost family, party. At first he supposed that this honour must have been intended for the Portuguese Minister at Berlin, who betrayed some annoyance when asked by him if he had received a similar invitation. On arriving, however, at the Imperial Palace he received a warm welcome, and most flattering and complimentary attentions on the part of the aged German sovereign:

'I am so sorry,' said His Majesty, 'to learn that you are leaving us: but it would not be fair or right for me to stand in your way, or object to your well-merited promotion in your Royal Master's service. I desire, however, to bestow on you a personal mark of my regard at your departure, and I should like you to accept this decoration.'

He then handed to Soveral the insignia of a high German Order, and bade him, in the warmest terms, farewell. When his chief, the Portuguese Minister, beheld the decoration bestowed by the Emperor, his astonishment knew no bounds. The absurd part of the

whole affair was the fact that its presentation had been the result of a German Foreign Office blunder, The German Government was, it seems, anxious to draw Spain into the Triple Alliance, and it had been suggested by the German representative at Madrid that a young relative of the Spanish Prime Minister, Don Antonio Canovas del Castillo, might be usefully selected for the honour of a high German decoration, as a means of securing the goodwill of so powerful a member of the Spanish Government. This particular diplomatist, however, was a retiring person little known in Berlin society, and the German Foreign Office, at which Soveral was well known and popular, confused the two men and suggested the wrong one for the dinner and subsequent bestowal of the Order. It was said that Prince Bismarck, who was furious on hearing of this clumsy muddle, caused Soveral to be informed of the true facts and requested him to return a decoration which had been bestowed on him as the result of a mistake. This he flatly refused to do. The Emperor, he answered, had assured him that it was his own personal gift. For him to doubt the truth of this Imperial assurance would be a mark of ingratitude and disrespect to the venerable monarch, and should he have no descendant deserving of such an heirloom, he would wish it to be buried in his own tomb. The German Government, conscious of the absurdity of its own share in the matter, did not press for the return of the decoration.

On the day following the abortive 'Chocolaté' and my interview with M. de Soveral, the political horizon quickly cleared. News arrived that the Republican risings had been happily and, better still, promptly suppressed. All the representatives of the foreign States accredited to the King of Spain, after the 'Corro'

or walk behind their Catholic Majesties in the Gardens of S. Ildefonso, were received in formal audience by the King to offer the congratulations of their Governments. When Sir Robert Morier's turn came, I heard him express his satisfaction, which would, he said, certainly be shared by Her Britannic Majesty's Government, that this criminal revolt had been crushed, and his own pleasure at learning that its suppression had been effected without bloodshed. 'I am not quite sure that I agree with you there,' replied Alfonso XII with a smile, 'I should not have been sorry for a chance of shooting a few officers and generals.' 'You see,' he continued, as he noted a look of surprise in my chief's face, 'these constantly recurring *pronunciamentos* or officers' mutinies against the civil power were the curse and plague of my mother's reign. As a woman, she could not bear bloodshed: their authors were thus always, sooner or later, forgiven. They lived to fight another day and to keep the country in a state of constant disturbance. Until an example is made of the leaders, there will never be internal peace in Spain, and I am determined to repress these politico-military conspiracies with the utmost severity and energy.'

In a sense the King was right: but the *pronunciamento*, as a feature in political agitation, had been for some time the natural outcome of the development of Spanish institutions. In a country with a real constitutional Government, an unpopular or discredited Cabinet disappears as the result of a general election. But in Spain, in those days, an election was a farce. Two so-called Constitutional parties calling themselves 'Conservatives' or 'Liberals,' the respective heirs of the 'Moderados' and 'Progressistas' during Queen Isabel's reign, had, ever since the restoration of the Bourbons in 1874, succeeded one another in office. When a

Government so created became stale, disappointed its supporters, or was shaken by the succession of this or that group or clique of Deputies, the Cabinet very sensibly realized that the time had come for it to resign. Its retiring members were not unwilling to accept remunerative or honourable non-political appointments, quite consistent with their support of the Opposition. But as the two great parties split into subdivisions, owing to factions created by disaffection to this or that leader, the system of alternative and successive shares in the spoils of office became more difficult to work, and tended to produce a succession of mixed or Coalition Cabinets. The abuses attendant on elections, the falsification of votes, ballot boxes with sham bottoms, into which sham voting papers favouring the Government were inserted by its own official agents, votes recorded by electors long dead, 'who had learned in the cleansing fires of purgatory to repudiate the lax principles professed by them when they were alive,' were assisted by the reluctance of many constituencies to return opposition candidates, themselves powerless to promote, without the assistance of the Government, their respective local interests or schemes.

This system, however, unsatisfactory and corrupt as it was, had at least the merit of producing strong and stable Ministries. When, during the reign of the present King Alfonso XIII, the first free general election was held, under the supervision, not of partisan administrative officials, but of upright members of the judiciary whose honesty was beyond suspicion, no party obtained sufficient votes to be fully independent of the others. There were, of course, certain provinces in Spain which successfully resisted official pressure: Barcelona, for instance, returned supporters of Home Rule for Catalonia, and the Basque Provinces, except

largely Republican Biscay, a succession of zealous Carlists.

I once had the honour, when quite a young man, of meeting Don Carlos at Lord Ranelagh's house at Fulham, which has since become the Ranelagh Club. He was a handsome man, affable and cheerful, and a devoted admirer of the fair sex. An old aide-de-camp, General Luna was, I think, his name, attended him, and kindly explained to me that his Sovereign represented and championed the lofty causes of religion, of public integrity and of a high standard of private virtue. After dinner the conversation turned on mesmerism and auto-suggestion and the capacity of persons endowed with these wonderful powers to 'will' others into obeying their every wish. Various experiments illustrative of this theory were more or less successfully attempted upon guests with bandaged eyes, who were 'willed' to remove from a shelf or a table a previously selected book or object. When the turn of Don Carlos came, a disrespectful guest 'willed' that he should, after being duly blindfolded, remove a golden locket from the bosom of a very pretty low-gowned lady of the party. He responded with marvellous alacrity to this pleasing form of suggestion, and felt for the locket with so much eager zeal and sincerity that she uttered a loud scream of protest – 'Hélas, Madame,' cried Don Carlos, 'vous venez de me reveiller du plus delicieux des rêves.' The pious old general appeared highly gratified at this happy illustration of his master's devotion to female virtue.

I return for a short space to the political events which now occupied our Legation at Madrid. After restoring 'the Constitutional guarantees,' freedom of the Press, of public meetings, an immunity from arbitrary imprisonment, or even arrest, which the Liberal Govern-

ment had suspended, owing to the recent military revolts, the King of Spain decided in 1884 to pay a visit to Vienna, Berlin, Brussels, and Paris. This programme was a perfectly reasonable one, for the Queen of Spain was an Austrian Princess, but as it involved the King's passage *incognito* through France, it was not altogether to the taste of the French Government. No notice was, quite properly, taken of his brief unofficial stay in Paris, except a private visit paid to him, on behalf of the French Government, by M. Challemel Lacour.

At Vienna he was naturally welcomed as a kinsman by the Emperor Francis Joseph; and in Germany, where he was the guest of the Emperor William, he was appointed honorary colonel of a Uhlan regiment, at that moment quartered at Frankfurt, under the command of Prince Frederick Charles. He wore its uniform for the first time at a banquet given in his honour by the Spanish Minister at Berlin, but on reaching Brussels he was warned by his Legation at that Court that his acceptance of this German distinction, which as a neutral sovereign he could not very well decline without causing great offence, had been strongly resented at Paris, and that he might, not improbably, when he arrived there, be the object of unfriendly demonstrations.

It was now unfortunately too late to put off the Paris visit: to do so would have made matters worse. On arriving at the Gare du Nord, the King was received by the President of the Republic, Monsieur Grévy; but no sooner had they entered the carriage which was to convey him to his own Embassy than an angry mob hailed it with hisses and loud shouts of 'À bas les rois Uhlans et vive la République!' These hostile demonstrations were renewed on the following day when

Alfonso XII paid a State visit to the President of the French Republic at the Elysée Palace. Monsieur Grévy did his best to mend matters. He begged His Catholic Majesty not to mistake the rudeness of the rabble as expressing the sentiment of the French people, but to satisfy himself of the true feeling of friendship towards him at a banquet, which the Government had prepared in his honour, as the welcome guest of France. The King consented, but observed that, as the insult offered him had been public, he must on his side be authorized to make equally public the President's own expressions of regret. 'Not only do I authorize it,' exclaimed M. Grévy, 'but it is my own wish that your Majesty should act as you propose.'

The insult thus publicly offered to Spain in the person of her Sovereign, combined with the undercurrent of hostility to France which, ever since the Peninsular War, was an element of varying but always latent power in Spanish politics, produced, as soon as it was known at Madrid, a furious outburst of patriotic indignation. Was the heir of the Catholic Sovereigns, of the Great Charles, and of Philip II, whose troops had so frequently vanquished French armies, a mere vassal of France and forbidden as such to accept a civility from a great State with which Spain was on terms of friendship, without being hissed and insulted by the rabble of the boulevards? Even the hottest Spanish Republicans became for the moment Royalists in their sympathy with the national feeling. Ruiz Zorrilla, the chief instigator of the recent military meeting at Badajoz, proclaimed in his paper *El Porvenir* that he was a Spaniard before being a Republican and that he bitterly resented the offence offered to Spain in the person of the King. This expression of

anti-French feeling indirectly affected Spanish domestic politics. Not long after Alfonso XII had returned to Madrid, the Liberal Government of Señor Sagasta, in which Señor Ruy Gomez, an amiable and highly cultured man, had held the Ministry of State for Foreign Affairs, resigned (on October 12, 1884). He recommended the formation of a Conservative Ministry, with Don Antonio Canovas del Castillo as its chief.

Canovas was a man of the middle class, an Andalusian, who had begun life as a schoolmaster at Malaga: he had attained fame as an historian and a Parliamentary orator, and had been the chief agent in the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, after a stormy period of Republican disorder and civil war. King Alfonso was at bottom a little jealous of this Warwick, who was sometimes inclined to treat him as a boy. 'I don't want,' he used to say, 'a grandpapa and grandmamma' (*No quiere ayos*). He would himself have preferred to constitute a new Liberal ministry based on an alliance between the moderate Liberals and Radicals, the former representing the old Progressist party under Queen Isabel, and the latter a more advanced element, inclining towards a Democratic monarchy, such as that of Amadeus of Savoy. This party, greatly reduced in numbers and still known as the 'Dynastic Left,' which long recognized as its leader Don Melquiades Alvarez, has always had a certain attraction for Spanish intellectuals and philosophers. It had been discredited by the failure, first of Amadeus himself, a foreigner unused to Spanish ways, and then of both the rival forms of Republic, the one centralized, and the other federal. Its strongest speaker in my time was Señor Martos, a Monarchist, but a keen and sturdy Radical. The

King accordingly offered the premiership to Señor Posada Herrera with General Lopez Dominguez and Señor Ruez Gomez as, respectively, Ministers for War and for Foreign Affairs.

The new Cabinet's programme was a Liberal revision of Canovas' Constitution of 1874, the introduction of manhood suffrage, and the cultivation of closer and more friendly relations with Germany. This feature of its programme was acceptable to and had been demanded by Canovas, but he was opposed to the Radical revision of the Constitution, of which he was himself the author, reopening as it did the prospect of sterile academical debates on political abstractions, such as those in which eloquent tribunes of the type of Don Emilio Castelar would indulge for hours and days, without offering any practical solutions. When, however, early in 1885, the dissensions between its advanced and moderate elements made its tenure of office impossible, the King was obliged to fall back upon Canovas, and a new purely Conservative Government was formed under him as Premier. Amongst its strongest members was the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Don José Eldnayen, an able and very honest and straightforward man, whose odd French gave rise to many comic anecdotes, some of them doubtless not so much authentic as maliciously invented for the amusement of society in Madrid. One of these alleged sayings was, 'Je me suis toujours comporté d'une façon digne d'une haute potence.' (*Potencia* in Spanish means a power, not a gibbet.) And when his wife was not given her proper place at a dinner, 'J'exige que l'on sache que mon épouse est une femme publique et doit toujours être traitée comme telle.' But I suspect that these Castilian 'spoonerisms' were invented or improved by unkind

jesters, who competed with one another in producing them.

In Señor Silvela the new Government acquired a wise and dignified Minister of Justice, and in Señor Romero Robledo a young and able orator, whose attitude towards the older Conservatives recalled that of Lord Randolph Churchill; but the appointment which gave the greatest offence to the Liberal and Radical parties was that of Don Alexandro Pidal y Mon. He was a zealous Ultramontane, in the prime of life, handsome, with a flowing dark beard, earnest and even passionate in his championship of Church and King and of exclusive clerical control over schools and cemeteries, which excited the Radicals to madness. The accession of the new Cabinet to office was rather unwelcome to Sir Robert Morier, who had looked forward to concluding a commercial treaty with the anti-Protectionist Liberals. At the next levée the King expressed to him his own fear that the change of ministry had disappointed his hopes.

While that change was still occupying public attention, the German Crown Prince landed at Valencia on a visit to Madrid, so as not to have to pass through France, for the purpose of returning the King's visit to his father, whose advanced years would have rendered so long and tiring a journey inexpedient. All the representatives of foreign States attended the King of Spain on the platform of the Southern Railway station at which the Imperial guest was to arrive. He looked a fine figure, rather dwarfing King Alfonso, who sat by his side in the State carriage, and who of course wore the Uhlan uniform which had caused so much trouble in Paris. On the following Sunday, the German Protestants having no chapel of their own, the English service was held at a hired room belonging

to the Bible Society in a street not far from the Legation. Sir Robert told the Embassy chaplain, Mr. Whereat, to preach a short sermon without any allusion to the illustrious visitor. I thought he sailed rather near the wind; for his text, taken from one of the chapters prescribed by the Liturgy for the day, was, 'Wherever the carcass is, there shall the eagles be gathered together.' On his return to lunch with us at the Legation, I ventured to recall my presentation to His Imperial Highness several years earlier at Oxford, which he very politely pretended to remember.

The friendly relations between Spain and Germany, which this visit was intended to cement, were soon destined to be rudely disturbed. Ever since our occupation of Egypt had aroused the resentment and jealousy of France, she had, in agreement with M. Jules Ferry, pursued an active and, in a great measure, an anti-British colonial policy. To this cause are to be ascribed the Berlin conference of 1884, the formation of the Congo Free State, and the attempt to create German colonies and dependencies in unoccupied parts of Australasia and East Africa. The Gladstone Government, representing as it did a reaction against its predecessor's Imperialism, was not prepared to offer any vigorous resistance to German colonial expansion, even at the expense of British interests. But though Bismarck was contemptuous of British Liberal opposition, he forgot to reckon with the ancient claims of Spain in south-eastern Asia, which had passed partly to her and partly to Holland, as co-heirs of the old Portuguese colonial empire. A group of islands known as the Carolines, long regarded as a dependency of the Spanish Philippine Archipelago, was, for practical purposes, a 'no man's land,' and had never, or at least for any considerable period, been effectually adminis-

tered by the local authorities at Manila. They constituted, however, together with the neighbouring Mariana Islands and the so-called Palaos Archipelago, a Spanish province held in right of ancient and undisputed possession.

All of a sudden, early in August, 1884, news arrived at Madrid reporting that a German force had landed at Yap, one of the Caroline Islands, and had unfurled the German flag upon its shores. This outrage, as it appeared to the patriotic Spaniards, produced an effect somewhat similar to that of the partition treaty of 1697, between England, France, and Holland, when 'John Bull, Lewis Baboon, and Nick Frog' cut up the estate of 'Lord Strutt.' Don José Eldnayen protested in London and at Paris, and received promises both of British and of French support. But the outraged dignity of Spain would not endure the dilatory method of diplomacy, and the anger aroused against France by the insults offered to her King in Paris now blazed even more fiercely against 'the German robbers.' A furious mob 'demonstrated' in front of the German Legation, and the Radical deputy, Martos, harangued it from the balcony of the Military Club. He appealed to his countrymen to prove that the blood of the soldiers who had vanquished Napoleon at Bailen still ran in the veins of their descendants, whilst within its walls General Salamanca tore off and flung into the street a German decoration bestowed on him by the German Emperor. A few days later (September 4) the angry populace attacked Count Solms' Legation (not yet raised to the rank of an Embassy), tore down the Imperial escutcheon and burnt it in the Puerta del Sol. Similar scenes took place in the provinces, and Canovas, who throughout all this had kept his head, warned the King that the nation could

only be appeased by a compromise satisfactory to its honour.

The Government was alone in a position to effect this result, for the Liberal leader, Sagasta, had already demanded a declaration of war against Germany. His violent language was re-echoed and applauded in all the clubs. I remember asking an excited patriot and friend of my own how Spain could ever hope, with her present scanty military reserves, to defeat Germany, as he talked of doing. He replied that three centuries previously his country's armies had traversed and ravaged it from one end to another, and appeared in fact to be cheerfully relying on a repetition of Spinola's historic occupation of the Palatinate. Even those who did not dream these dreams seemed to think it patriotic to talk in public as if they were realities.

Meanwhile Prince Bismarck began to be seriously alarmed at an explosion of Spanish national indignation, which threatened to undo his policy of attaching Spain to the Central Powers. His first step was to order the German occupying force to evacuate the Carolines at once. He refused to resent the insults offered to the Emperor's representative and flag; and put forward a suggestion well calculated to please the Conservative and Catholic ministry at Madrid, that the whole question should, without delay, be referred to the arbitration of the Pope. He thus killed two birds with one stone, for the implied recognition of His Holiness as a temporal and not merely a spiritual potentate had the effect of improving the relations between Berlin and the Vatican, and thus securing the support of the German Centre or Catholic party for the Bill establishing the Septennate, or seven years' military training, on which the German Government had long been bent. Moreover, it helped out of a

serious difficulty a Conservative or Clerical Spanish ministry and indirectly conciliated, by Bismarck's evident desire to restore good relations with Spain, many Spanish Liberals and Radicals whose sympathies had hitherto inclined towards the French Republic.

Though I did not myself suspect it, my own stay in Spain was fast drawing to a close. It had been a very pleasant one, largely owing to the kindness of Sir Robert and Lady Morier, and of my immediate superior in the chancery, Mr. (now Sir Maurice) de Bunsen, who had succeeded Mr. Langley and with whom I shared a flat in the square, at whose western side stands the royal palace. We frequently rode together over the lovely wooded country to the north-west of Madrid, and sometimes followed the hounds, which hunted over the wide and open plains extending to the westward on both sides of the road leading through Talavera to Oropesa and Estremadura. Madrid had moreover two respectable clubs, the Ateneo, a learned institution providing lectures and an excellent library, and the Veloz, a more social one, with an excellent table at which, when not elsewhere engaged, we habitually lunched and dined, and which was open practically all night. The hours between midnight and two in the morning were those amongst others at which it was convenient to do business at the ministries or public offices – when the chiefs looked in after the play or a late evening 'tertulia.' Yet I was once a little surprised, when on entering the 'Veloz' at about half-past one in the afternoon to order lunch, I saw a group of players, one of whom was a white-bearded senator and recent Minister of Public Education, seated with several friends in tail-coats and white ties round a table amidst

piles of extinct cigar-ends, still playing a card game which had actually lasted since eleven o'clock on the previous evening!

Like all youthful visitors to Spain, I went from time to time to the bull-fights. I once induced Sir Robert Morier to come with me to see a 'novillada' or letting loose of a young bull calf, which a number of boys and hobbledehoys pursued into the arena with sticks and umbrellas, but which on this particular occasion gored one of them so badly that he was carried out and died a few minutes later of his injuries. A poorly dressed Spaniard who sat next us, on the cheap seats on the stone steps leading down to the arena, had noted an expression of disgust on Sir Robert Morier's face while the horses were being slaughtered, and assured him that if he would only wait for the 'novillada' he might count on seeing at least one or two human victims. When an injured man was carried out dying, he kept on repeating, 'Muerto, muerto,' as though we ought to realize that we had had our money's worth, as spectators of a really tragic scene.

What was, however, a really fine spectacle was the kind of bull-fight known as 'Caballeros de Plaza' in which amateurs, all of them gentlemen, riding, in the costume of the eighteenth century, their own beautiful thoroughbred horses with such skill that the bull cannot gore them, succeed so completely in tiring him out that he falls, at the close of the performance, a fairly easy victim to the swordsman or 'espada.'

In those days the three great professional heroes of the bull-ring were Frascuelo, Lagartijo and Mazzantini, the latter an Italian who had been an official on the Andalusian railway connecting Cordova with Seville and Cadiz. Frascuelo was generally considered the

greatest of them. I once rode from Granada to Malaga with an 'arriero,' or muleteer, who took my luggage, and had himself been a 'banderillero,' or planter of sharp darts in the bull's flesh. He insisted on taking me some miles out of my way to visit the great matador's birthplace – a ruinous cottage in which a poor woman was nursing a cradled baby. When my guide explained that I was a stranger, who had come all the way from England to visit the great bull-fighter's birthplace, the kindly mother beamed with pleasure and, climbing a ladder to the roof, plucked off as a present to me a handful of thatch: 'When,' she said, 'you return to Madrid, go to the "Café Imperial" and show this piece of thatch to Frascuelo, telling him it comes from his former home and that the friends of his boyhood, who remember him as a mere child, still watch with a proud interest his great and glorious career.'

I thanked her and kissed the sleeping infant, with the expression of a pious hope that it would grow up to be as great a man as the illustrious ex-occupant of its historic cradle, to which she reverently answered, 'May God will it.' But, alas! I never had my talk with Frascuelo, for I lost the piece of thatch which would have been the pretext of my visit, and I felt that it would hardly do for me to call on him without it. I believe he was quite a good fellow. When Lord Northampton came to Spain in 1875 to congratulate Alfonso XII on behalf of the British Government on his happy restoration to the throne of his ancestors, he met Frascuelo at Seville. His daughter, Lady Margaret Compton, so at least I was told, expressed her admiration of the splendid bull-fighter's dress which he was wearing, and which she said was very becoming. Next day he insisted on her accepting, as a

memento of their pleasant meeting, another gorgeous costume of the same kind.

During my stay in Spain I managed, at occasional intervals, to see a good deal of the country, and I paid a second visit to Gibraltar, governed at that time by Sir John Adye. I was received by Colonel Brackenbury, a member of his military mess, and often went out hunting with the 'Calpe' pack of hounds. Sir Robert Morier had asked me to explain to the Governor the complaints made by the Spanish ministers of the contraband traffic in tobacco, which was certainly very considerable. I once rode from Algeciras to Ronda, losing my way at night in the hills near Gaucin. I remember how almost all the horsemen and muleteers with whom I exchanged greetings and inquiries as to the objects of our respective journeys, frankly announced that they were smugglers, either going to, or returning with tobacco from Gibraltar. The authorities of the Rock were, however, less to blame than the population of the adjacent Spanish villages. Sir John Adye told me that he kept in the harbour a small vessel appropriately known as the 'grappler,' whose duty it was to seize boats of all descriptions passing out of British waters after sunset. She had, a few days previously, stopped in Gibraltar harbour a vessel leaving it laden with tobacco, which was consigned to the alcalde or mayor of the neighbouring large village of San Roque. An hour or so later numerous rockets and other signals were to be seen going up from the Spanish shore to the west of Algeciras Bay, and a closer observation with strong telescopes revealed the presence of a large assemblage of horsemen, mules and donkeys. The alcalde of San Roque had come down with his ædiles and police to take possession of the contraband tobacco. He was

deeply vexed, and indeed indignant, at the action of the British authorities in officiously detaining it till daylight.

I recall in connection with Gibraltar another little incident in which the actors were a runaway wife and her lover, the former married to a Colonel, the latter a young subaltern. On returning from a day's hunting they had ridden off together into Spain, and in consequence of telegrams from the authorities of the Rock, had been arrested by the Spanish police about half-way on the road to Malaga. De Bunsen, my immediate superior in Sir Robert Morier's temporary absence, rather favoured – he was not yet, any more than I myself, a husband – the view that the Spanish officials had no right to interfere on moral grounds with the freedom of their movements as British subjects. The lady's telegraphic appeals to him, ending, 'Do please help us,' really moved his kind and chivalrous heart. But though younger, I was less sentimental, and I submitted to him that a British officer, whether or not escorting a lady, and however madly in love with her, could not quit a British fortress in which he was quartered and withdraw into a foreign jurisdiction without the formal sanction of his military superiors. He might indeed be treated as one of those deserters for whose reciprocal surrender arrangements are invariably made by conterminous administrations. I felt somewhat ungenerous in defending this unknightly doctrine, but I believed it to be sound, at least as regards the man, whom the lady declined to abandon; and this view was apparently shared by the Rock authorities. They took over the fugitives from the Spanish police and kept them in quarantine at Algeciras – there being cholera in Spain – whence they managed to escape again, and – I believe – finally, by

the simple plan of greasing the palms of some venal sanitary officials.

In the course of my travels in southern Spain, I paid a second visit to Tangier, where I made the acquaintance of our Minister in Morocco, the celebrated Sir John Drummond Hay. I had got to know his younger brother, our Consul-General at Tripoli, in the course of an earlier tour there, undertaken on a holiday from my Foreign Office labours in North Africa, Malta, and Sicily. Sir John, who took me out with him to shoot wild pig, at a short distance from Tangier, was a very remarkable man: he had begun life as an Attaché at Constantinople under the great Eltchi, Lord Stratford de Radcliffe, and was one of the few members of his staff who was not afraid to face his anger. When on one occasion Lord Stratford lost his temper, and exclaimed, 'Damn your eyes, Mr. Hay,' he replied, 'Damn your Excellency's eyes, sir,' and was answered, 'Quite right, my boy; I had no business to swear at you.' His influence over the Moors was very great, and was illustrated by numerous anecdotes. One of them, which he himself related to me, always struck me as a curious illustration of the confidence which he inspired.

A wealthy Tangier merchant came late one night to see him and told him that he had just received a summons to the Court of the Sultan of Morocco. 'I know,' he added, 'and you yourself will probably grasp, the reason of this summons: it means that I shall not live much longer. I wish therefore to entrust to your custody a number of chests full of money which are now in the cellars of my house. Send some camels of your own to fetch them before to-morrow at midnight, and conceal them in the British Legation, but let no one suspect that they are there, until you

deem it safe to allow my sons to know it.' That night the camels came round to the merchant's house; Sir John's trusted servants transferred several heavy chests of treasure to the Legation, and their owner started next day for the Court. He was honoured with an invitation to dine at the Sultan's palace. A few hours later he was desperately ill – His Sherifian Majesty's own doctor, as a mark of his Sovereign's sympathy, was sent to prescribe for him. Strange to say, his prescriptions were unavailing and the patient got rapidly worse. When a few hours later he expired, it was found that, as a mark of his gratitude to his Imperial master, he had made a will leaving him practically the whole of the vast wealth which his skill as a merchant was believed to have amassed. A week or so later the Basha of Tangier was directed, as executor, to take over the estate on behalf of the Commander of the Faithful. But the merchant's house was searched in vain: the cellars in which it was believed that the treasure amassed by him was hidden, proved empty. His young sons were seized and severely bastinadoed, but could throw no light on the mysterious disappearance of their father's reputed colossal wealth. After a time the story was forgotten. Sir John then sent for the merchant's sons, whom he had advised in the interval to go over to Gibraltar, where employment had been procured for them, and to remain there so long as the Sultan was alive. On his death they were informed that their father's wealth had been transferred from the cellars of the Legation to a bank at Gibraltar, which would pay them a regular interest and, if they wished for it, the principal whenever they deemed it judicious to bring it across to Tangier. Then, and only then, were they able without peril to draw upon the estate, now greatly

increased in value, which Sir John's camels, many years ago, had, without their own knowledge, conveyed from their home to his own cellars.

At Tangier I also met our Consul, Mr. White, a dignified old gentleman with a long white beard, whose son eventually succeeded Sir John Hay as British Minister. The post had been successively occupied by several other ministers, three of whom, Sir West Ridgeway, Sir Charles Euan Smith, and Sir Gerald Lowther, were subsequently friends of my own. The Anglo-French agreement of 1904 and the later one concluded with Spain during King Edward VII's visit to Carthagena changed for many years the political situation in Morocco. It substituted a Franco-Spanish 'condominium' as the future ideal of British policy. But it looks as if further reciprocal concessions will be necessary before the difficulties arising out of conflicting aspirations, more especially in regard to the future administration of Tangier, can be regarded as definitely settled.

Early in the spring of 1885 it was announced that the Queen of Spain was about to become a mother, and the diplomatic body, headed by the Papal Nuncio, proceeded in state to the palace to offer its congratulations to their Majesties. The ceremony resembled the usual levée, at which the King and Queen sat on their thrones, placed on a raised dais, whilst the Infantas and the ladies of the Court occupied lower seats on their left and watched the long procession of grandees, holders of ministerial and other public offices, bishops, nobles, and officers of the army and navy, pass before them, each making a low bow. The diplomatic body stood facing their Majesties, each foreign representative's staff standing behind him. When all the Spaniards had passed and bowed, the King, Queen

and Infantas left their thrones, and conversed with each separate Ambassador or Envoy, who presented to them any new members of his staff. On this occasion, however, the Nuncio made a little speech, discreetly alluding to the happy event, which was expected to consolidate the prospects of the Spanish monarchy. The Queen, rather blushingly, for a public address on such a subject – (the Spanish word for pregnancy is 'embarrassment') – is apt to be a little trying to a lady, briefly acknowledged the Archiepiscopal congratulations. Besides these levées or drawing rooms, to give them their English name, there was usually every season, unless a royal mourning prevented it, a very full Court ball. At the one which took place at this period, I was presented to Queen Isabel II. I was struck by the queenly dignity and charm of manner which distinguished her, notwithstanding her age and a marked inclination to stoutness. Her voice, and in this she recalled our own Queen, was musical: and though she can never have been really beautiful, she preserved a most attractive smile. A few weeks later I sat in a box close to her at the great Easter Sunday bull-fight in Seville, when she received an immense popular ovation.

A curious ceremony just before Easter was always attended by us, that of the washing by the King and Queen of the feet of twelve poor and aged men and women. This, was I believe, last practised in England by Queen Elizabeth, and is now superseded by the gift of the Maundy coins by the Lord High Almoner. The ceremony took place in the royal palace, in an apartment containing an altar at one end, and filled with tables and benches for a fairly heavy repast laid out for the recipients of the royal bounty. A chaplain read an appropriate passage from the Bible,

and when the poor old men and women had had their feet washed by the King and Queen respectively out of basins carried by courtiers, they sat down at the tables assigned to them, on which gorgeously uniformed officials successively placed piles of fish, puddings, fruit and other delicacies appropriate to the Lenten fast. Somewhat to my surprise, when I first witnessed the ceremony, it recalled the Barmecide feast, for no sooner had one courtier put down a dish before an aged pauper, than another one whisked it away. This struck me as rather a bad joke, till I learnt that the viands were all put into bags and distributed to their selected recipients, who preferred to sell this mass of food in the market and turn it into money than attempt to devour it. It was part of the same tradition that the King on the following day commuted, like Pilate in the case of Barabbas, the sentence of a criminal already condemned to death.

The Court balls at Madrid presented, and still do so, a brilliant scene, and the crowds attending them struck me as larger than was the case in England. At the one held in 1885, the last which I attended, a somewhat comic incident occurred. An American diplomatist had bought a new pair of pumps for the occasion, which were too tight for his feet, and which subjected him to excruciating pain. He complained to several colleagues of 'these fixings,' as he termed them, and of their price, higher than that which he gave in New York. When no one could suggest any remedy, he declared himself unable to endure them any longer, removed them and solemnly placed them by his side on a cushioned seat. One of the lords-in-waiting approached him and explained that his dress was incomplete. The Queen and Infantas were dancing, as he could not fail to see, a few yards off, and he must

be good enough to resume his pumps at once. He tried, but the effort was agonizing, and he appealed to the friendly courtier to assist him. The latter went up to the King, who was soon observed in fits of laughter. Then he hurriedly disappeared from the ball-room, and returned bearing a pair of roomy, indeed huge, 'bedroom' or 'bath' slippers. 'His Majesty,' he said to the American, 'begs you to accept these: they are his own, and he trusts that you will try them and, if you find them comfortable, keep them.' The gift caused the Transatlantic diplomatist the most lively satisfaction. He related it, delightedly pointing to the slippers, to every one he met at the ball, and announced that he intended to prepare a dispatch on the incident to his Government.

Besides the Court balls, many dances were given in Madrid, the finest I witnessed being one given to their Catholic Majesties by the Duke of Fernan Nuñez at his palace. A very pleasant house was that of Señor Bauer, the representative in Spain of Messrs. Rothschild, at which one met all the leading politicians. Indeed a pleasing feature of Spanish political life was the friendly intercourse which existed among men of all parties. In marked contrast with the stiffness which existed in France and other Latin countries between the representatives of opposing political parties, those in Spain were always willing to meet on neutral ground, and, at Señor Bauer's, strong Conservative statesmen fraternized with Republicans, such as the great tribune Castelar, the finest parliamentary orator of his day. I remember hearing Castelar after an eloquent philippic against the Government, applauded and congratulated on his splendid attack by the very statesmen whom he had just furiously denounced. Such an incident might conceivably happen in England;

but in Spain it was looked upon as quite natural. Yet her rulers, such was the liberty of the stage, were sometimes held up to ridicule at the lesser theatres. I recollect, when the cholera first spread from Alicante to Madrid, seeing a play at which the members of the Cabinet, Prime Minister included, appeared dressed up in grotesque black garments to represent 'cholera microbes.'

In October, 1884, I was instructed by the Foreign Office to draw up a report on the management of lunatic asylums in Spain. This instruction was inspired, if I remember rightly, by a Mrs. Weldon, an English lady who was interested in the risks of incarceration, in homes for the insane, of persons who were really of perfectly sound minds. For many years there had been from time to time cases of such incarceration. I was directed to report on the working of these institutions. Many of them dated from the Middle Ages, and had been in the main controlled by monastic and other ecclesiastical bodies, who were the first to take an interest in these sufferers.

I found, after visiting the principal homes for lunatics in Spain, that they were divided into three categories: National, Provincial, and Private. The lunatics were classified according to the forms and stages of their disease. Some were 'raving maniacs,' others 'semi-tranquil' or 'tranquil patients.' Those of the first two classes were confined in what were practically cells, or small rooms with no furniture but a bedstead almost level with the ground, but not padded, as was the fashion in England. I only saw one raving patient. Most of the lunatics appeared quiet, and were allowed to wander at will in the grounds attached to the institution. Some of the non-paying patients were employed in domestic services of various kinds, the men

in gardening and outdoor work, the women in the kitchen and laundry. The treatment struck me as kind and humane, but was probably less scientific than that prevalent in countries where insanity has been more thoroughly studied. I was told that the percentage of those who recovered their reason was very small. The rooms seemed not inferior in comfort to those to be found in the houses of fairly well-to-do Spaniards. The patients, being all paying, were not employed in any work, but there was a billiard-room, a piano, Spanish cards, and other amusements. Most of those whom I saw were persons of the middle class, a few of lower station, and one or two had evidently belonged to good society. Among the lunatics, as was only to be expected, I came into contact with some curious patients. One of them had just won a prize offered by the Government for the best poem on the discovery of America by Columbus, the anniversary of which was being celebrated that year. Another, a very eccentric person, had developed a violent hatred for one of the lunacy doctors. The latter was an extreme advocate of the Communist opinions which at that time were common amongst the more advanced Republicans. It so happened that one of his legs was shorter than the other, and this unequal feature the lunatic determined to destroy. When the doctor entered his room, he made a sudden rush at him, threw him on to his back, and seizing a large carving knife, attempted, 'in the sacred name of Equality,' to cut the two legs into similar sizes, and it was with the greatest difficulty that he was prevented from carrying out his purpose. 'So long as the care of the insane,' I wrote in my report, 'is regarded as merely one among many similar and equally important branches of charity and public health, as one of a number of other duties imposed on

officials who, besides being fully employed with other matters, have none of the special qualifications and experience necessary, so long must the nominal control of the administration be necessarily, to a great extent, ineffectual.'

The most energetic civil Governors had too much to do for the constant and thorough inspections needed, however excellent the management, and however high the reputation of the proprietors. The number and variety of the benevolent institutions of every kind within the limits of his province made it difficult to prescribe any certain or uniform rules as to the manner and frequency of his visits. As a consequence, the matter was left to his discretion, and it seemed to me that until this was systematically done, there was little to be learnt from the lunacy legislation of Spain.

In the spring of 1885, I went home on two months' leave, but just as my holiday was drawing to a close the Gladstone Government of 1880 resigned, nominally as the result of a division upon cordite, but really owing to differences in regard to Irish policy, and the unpopularity which attached to it since its failure to rescue General Gordon at Khartoum. Lord Salisbury, to whom I owed my first appointment in the Foreign Office, was desired by the Queen to form a new Conservative Ministry. To my great surprise, I received an offer from him of the post of précis writer in the Foreign Office, for he combined with the office of Prime Minister that of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Who suggested me to him I never knew; perhaps his eldest son, Cranborne, whom I had known at Eton and Oxford and who belonged with me to the Canning Club. I was, however, really an assistant to Sir Eric Barrington, Lord Salisbury's private secretary in his capacity as Foreign Secretary, for most of

his secretarial work as Prime Minister was performed by Mr. Henry Manners, who afterwards became Duke of Rutland. The prospect of serving the great Tory statesman, who had long been my political hero, was most attractive, especially as my father had given up his command at Gibraltar, and settled in London at a house in Lower Grosvenor Place.

The work of the Private Secretary's department in the Foreign Office was distinct from that of the Prime Minister, although questions occasionally arose in regard to which they overlapped. The official dispatches from the heads of the foreign missions abroad and the official notes from the Foreign Embassies in London did not usually pass through our hands before reaching Lord Salisbury. He received them straight from the heads of the various departments, West European, Eastern, Far Eastern, and American, and from the Permanent Under-Secretary of State. But we had to docket, minute, and in some cases answer private letters from British diplomatic representatives abroad, dealing with matters of a confidential nature not intended for the general information of the Cabinet. In addition to these, there was a daily influx of written communications of all sorts from unofficial persons, sometimes Tory Members of Parliament, who pleaded on behalf of some interest dear to their constituents – Tory electors who insisted it would be to the advantage of the party that this or that meritorious local politician should receive a reward in the shape of a peerage or knighthood; or clergymen whose friends hinted more discreetly that their services would be usefully rewarded by a mitre. I remember being amused by a letter from a gentleman belonging to this class, who explained, after citing various prelates who had failed to obtain

University honours, that although himself only a pass man, he had neglected no occasion of denouncing Messrs. Gladstone and Chamberlain and insisting that 'both of them ought to expiate their numerous crimes and treasons on a gibbet.' This, I think, I answered: 'The Prime Minister has received your letter pointing out various grounds for your appointment to a bishopric.' Lord Salisbury made it a rule to have every letter, however absurd or unimportant, acknowledged in writing. We used, for example, at one time to get almost daily communications from an old gentleman belonging to the Carlton Club about some curious dreams he had had there after luncheon. He believed they foretold, if correctly interpreted, important political developments. The reception of these effusions was usually, or at least frequently, acknowledged with an expression of the Prime Minister's thanks. I think I ignored a still stranger one from a gentleman who sent his photograph – that of a solidly-built, bearded man – observing that some of his friends had been struck by his resemblance to the great Conservative Prime Minister, and asking on the strength of this strange similarity for the bestowal of a public appointment on his son.

More interesting than these odd communications were the private letters for the British Ambassadors and Ministers abroad. Only a few weeks after the settlement of the Penjdeh incident, occurred the revolt of Eastern Roumelia against Gavril Aleko Pasha and the proclamation of its union with Bulgaria, accepted by the latter's ruler, Prince Alexander of Hesse-Battenberg. The Serbo-Bulgarian War which followed threatened for a moment the revival of the Eastern question in an acute and very perilous form. Lord Salisbury was strongly in favour of the union of

the two Bulgarias, as calculated to create a strong buffer state between the Danube and the Bosphorus. His policy was successfully represented at the Tophane Conference at Constantinople by our able representative Sir William White, who was sent there from his Legation in Roumania.

Simultaneously with these events in the Balkans, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, who with Mr. Balfour, Mr. Gorst, and Lord Randolph Churchill was beginning, as member for Portsmouth, to form the future 'Fourth Party,' was dispatched as Special High Commissioner to Cairo, in order to negotiate with the Ottoman High Commissioner, Mukhtar Pasha, a settlement of Anglo-Turkish difficulties in Egypt, for the Penjdeh incident on the Afghan frontier had been set at rest by the arbitration of the King of Denmark, and British prestige in India greatly strengthened by a successful campaign against King Theebaw, the dissolute and quarrelsome tyrant of Burmah, whose dominions, conquered by General Prendergast, were annexed to India by her new Viceroy, Lord Dufferin.

Lord Salisbury took the keenest interest in all the dispatches received by him from our missions in every part of the globe. On one occasion, when I was working for him at Hatfield, a muscular pain in one of his arms made it an effort to turn over the voluminous pages of some of these reports, and I used therefore to read them aloud to him. Some of them seemed to me of inadequate interest, coming as they did from minor states such as Holland and Denmark, describing local controversies in their Parliaments, more especially in that of Copenhagen, where King Christian IX was in conflict with the Radical Danish Folkething or House of Commons. I suggested skipping a particularly long report on this subject, and he answered, 'Oh, no! I

particularly want to hear it!' His own chief achievement was the unification of Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, effected after the battle of Slivnitza, of which an unkind joker had remarked, 'Le Prince Alexandre est monté sur son cheval de bataille et le roi Milan sur sa chaise percée.' Queen Victoria was very strongly on the side of Prince Alexander of Bulgaria, the brother-in-law of her daughter Princess Beatrice, and in favour of his marriage to her grandchild, the daughter of the Crown Prince of Prussia. To this Bismarck was strongly opposed, mainly owing to his not unnatural reluctance to permit an Imperial German princess to be a hostage in a Balkan principality shaken by civil commotions. The Iron Chancellor doubted his reigning long. When consulted by Prince Alexander as to accepting the throne of Bulgaria, he had only replied that 'it might prove an interesting episode to look back on' ('eine Schöne Erinnerung'), though he himself hardly foresaw the causes and still less the rapidity of the new Bulgarian ruler's fall.

One of Lord Salisbury's first steps, on taking office, was to reopen a direct personal correspondence with Prince Bismarck, who had been on bad terms with the Gladstone Ministry ever since its refusal to quarrel with France over Egypt. He himself was most patient in his interviews with the foreign diplomatists. He suffered from the constant visits of the Turkish Ambassador, Rustem Pasha, a cultivated Syrian Catholic of Italian origin. One day his forbearance gave way, and on my telling him, as he was off to Hatfield, that Rustem wished to see him at once, he replied, 'Yes, I know, but I'm at Hatfield!' I gave the Turk the message, which implied the present rather than the more accurate future, and was showing him politely

out, when at the end of the passage we suddenly saw Lord Salisbury open his door and descend a back staircase. Rustem turned on me with a look of silent resentment, too intense to find expression in mere words.

Sir Philip Currie, who was afterwards Ambassador at Rome, Paris, and Constantinople, was at that time Assistant Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs. He was an able man, but sometimes a little peppery and quick to wrath. I had, at this period, a rather severe 'head-washing' from him under comical circumstances. Mr. Stead, the north-country Nonconformist editor of the *Pall Mall Gazette*, had just begun a campaign against the 'White Slave' traffic. He had got into touch with us in connection with an experiment in the case of a girl, Eliza Armstrong, which aimed at illustrating the ease and impunity with which such seductions could be effected. One of the agents in this somewhat disreputable proceeding professed to be a champion of all the virtues, and, failing to obtain direct access to the Prime Minister, he sought an interview with me. I was the only private secretary at that moment disengaged in the Foreign Office.

He proceeded to explain that many English girls were kidnapped and taken over to brothels on the Continent, and that he now proposed himself to visit its principal cities, 'disguised,' as he put it, 'as a debauchee,' a part which I thought, when I saw him, he might impersonate with ease. What he wanted from me was a series of letters to our Ambassadors and Ministers in those foreign capitals in which profligacy of every kind was most rampant. They might, he thought, place at his disposal some youthful attaché or junior secretary – not improbably unfamiliar with them – to take him round these shocking scenes of vice.

I told him that I could not give him any such introductions on my own initiative. But I advised him to see Sir Philip Currie, who might perhaps be able to assist him. 'Is he,' he asked, 'at heart a supporter of our moral crusade?' I replied that Sir Philip would doubtless sympathize with any moral object, and I showed him the door leading to his room. A few minutes later I heard it violently banged to the sound of hurried retreating footsteps, and a servant came to say that Sir Philip wished to speak to me at once. He was furiously angry and asked what I meant by sending such a scoundrel to see him, and still more by suggesting his personal sympathy with the aims of this disreputable blackguard. I replied that I had merely suggested, not, I trusted, incorrectly, that any moral or virtuous undertaking could not fail to enlist his warm support, but that if I was mistaken, it seemed better that the agent's explorations should be discouraged by the highest authority, rather than by a mere junior official like myself. What actually happened on the Continent I never heard, but I have a vague recollection that, in England, the agent's 'experiments' involved him in police court proceedings.

Mr. Stead himself was a well-meaning and public-spirited, if not always a very wise, man. I got to know and to like him later on. He was a sincere and pious Nonconformist lay preacher, and an ardent north-country Radical. He had been, during the Russo-Turkish war, a great ally of Madame Olga de Novikoff, a talented Russian lady friend of mine, whom he had helped to defend her country's cause in the English Press against the Conservative and Turcophile 'jingoes.' I dined several times with him and Mrs. Stead at their hospitable house near Wimbledon, and I saw a good deal of him later when he edited the *Review of*

Reviews. He had paid a visit to Russia just before I became a member of Sir Robert Morier's staff. There he amused St. Petersburg by the easy fashion in which, after an interview with Alexander III, he dismissed the Emperor at its close with the words, 'Thank you, sir. I will not detain your Majesty any longer!' It was, the Tzar observed to a friend, the first time that he had been dismissed by a visitor!

Later on, Mr. Stead became deeply interested in spiritualism, and showed me one day what he asserted, and doubtless quite sincerely believed, to be a photograph of a real ghost, that of the Boer patriot Piet Botha. His belief in its genuineness was based on a visit received at his office at the close of the Boer War, when some Transvaal delegates came to England at the time of the Peace of Vereeniging. He showed them a photograph of an earlier deputation, in which Piet Botha figured, and was surprised to learn that, at the date of its visit, Piet had himself been for some time dead – so that when this photo was taken he could not possibly have been present at Stead's office in London in the flesh.

CHAPTER III

RUSSIA

At the end of 1885, Lord Salisbury appealed to the country, and a general election took place. His skilful conduct of Imperial affairs had strengthened his prestige and popularity in England, but this gain was counterbalanced by the difficulty of the Irish problem, as to which the Cabinet was still somewhat divided. A few of its members, including the broad-minded and far-seeing Viceroy, Lord Carnarvon, were inclined to favour some move in the direction of Home Rule, while Lord Salisbury regarded it as dangerous, and was unwilling to break up the Tory party by repeating the policy of Peel. Soon we found ourselves in the turmoil of a general election, in which, as the Prime Minister's personal secretary, I was permitted, to my intense delight, to join, as a speaker, both at Hatfield and at Hertford, on behalf of the Conservative candidate, Mr. Abel Smith. At Hatfield I heard an admirable speech by Lady Gwendolen Cecil; but the meeting at Hertford was in some ways more enjoyable, for it was my first experience of a somewhat rowdy political gathering. The Radicals tried to storm our platform, thus affording us the excitement of a free fight with them, our weapons being the broken legs of chairs, tables, and other articles of furniture. The result of this appeal to the country was to make the third vote in Parliament decisive. It soon became clear that in any moderate concessions which the Conservative leaders might offer, we should be hopelessly outdone by Mr. Gladstone. The latter's comments in a public letter to Parnell were very delphic, and I was severely rapped on the knuckles by Sir Thomas (since Lord) Sanderson, Lord Granville's private secretary, who

cherished certain Liberal, or at least Whiggish, sympathies, for impertinently asking him why the Liberal leader could not give a plain reply to a plain question. 'My dear Hardinge,' he observed rather tartly, 'when you have been in official life as long as I have, you will realize that there is nothing so difficult as to give what you are pleased to call a simple answer to a simple question.' He was himself a great stickler for certain venerable forms. The word 'American' applied to the United States Government, and the word 'Dutch' to that of the Netherlands, he regarded as in the highest degree improper, and I shudder to think what he would have said had he received, as I once did during my précis-writership, a card for Lord Salisbury containing the solitary words, 'El Illustre Americano' (the Illustrious American), a title which, I think, the Paraguayans had bestowed on one of their statesmen at that period travelling in Europe, and whose bearer, in Lord Salisbury's absence, I welcomed with profound demonstrations of respect. But what Lord Sanderson most objected to was the practice of saying, in inter-departmental correspondence, that the Minister at the head of one public department 'would be glad' to be informed of some opinion or decision arrived at by another. The phrase somehow had become common, but Sanderson could not endure it. 'Understand, once for all,' he would say, 'that Lord Lansdowne is *never* glad.' Able men often have their little oddities: and in his case they only served to intensify the affectionate regard which he inspired.

He was certainly correct in his view of the Irish question, for soon after the meeting of Parliament the Tory Government was defeated and resigned, and one formed by Mr. Gladstone took its place. My brief term of service under my hero-statesman and chief had

reached its close, though I spent the Christmas week at Hatfield, and afterwards a fortnight in Downing Street, arranging his private correspondence. There I beheld with satisfaction what we termed the first-fruits of the Radical triumph, in the shape of a rowdy procession of disorderly rioters, who for no apparent reason smashed the windows of shops and of clubs in Pall Mall and Piccadilly, until they were dispersed by the police.

Meanwhile, some important diplomatic changes had taken place. Sir Robert Morier had exchanged the Legation at Madrid for the more important post of Ambassador in Russia, and he very kindly offered me a transfer to St. Petersburg as his private secretary, with a home in the Embassy House. This was a large and handsome building, covered with red-coloured stucco, standing on the north bank of the Neva, and overlooking a large open square to the west. It faced the bridge which connects the southern bank of the Neva with the so-called Vasili Ostroff (Basil's Island), on whose southern shore rises the famous fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul, containing a barrack, a prison, and an early eighteenth-century cathedral, the burial-place of the sovereigns of Russia since the days of Peter the Great. Oddly enough, while the reception rooms of the Embassy were upstairs, its lower stories contained the offices and a good many bedrooms, as well as the Chancery, adjacent to which were a comfortable bedroom and sitting-room in which I did most of my work.

Our staff was a large one: Mr. Grosvenor, the First Secretary of the Embassy (the French term 'Councillor' had not yet been adopted in our service) had been married in China to an American lady; Mr. (afterwards Lord) Gough, the head of the Chancery; and the military attaché, Colonel Herbert, now Lord Treowen; Mr.

Helyar, a Somersetshire squire, with a very handsome wife, who on his death married Lord Savile; Mr. Welby, a member of an old Lincolnshire family; Mr. Fairholme, like myself a second secretary; and lastly Lord Henry Grosvenor, an honorary attaché. All these colleagues were very pleasant companions in their different ways, and I shall always remember Mr. Welby as the most polite person I ever met. His reluctance to contradict any statement, especially one emanating from a lady, was extraordinary, and was indeed on some occasions almost comic. At luncheon on one occasion a difference of opinion arose as to whether the day was a Wednesday or a Thursday, Sir Robert maintaining the latter and Lady Morier, a daughter of Sir Jonathan Peel, the former opinion. As they were unable to agree, they both appealed to Welby to decide the contested point. His hesitation betrayed extreme unwillingness to do so – it was just two o'clock in the afternoon – but at length, on being pressed from both sides, he observed, with a show of great reluctance and amidst shouts of laughter, 'Well, Lady Morier, if you *really* insist on it, I am inclined to think that it is *by now almost Thursday*.' A chivalrous unwillingness to seem to contradict a lady was surely never more politely expressed.

When I first arrived in Russia, the Emperor Alexander III had been for five years upon the throne. He embodied a strong reaction against the Liberal policy of his father, who, a few days before his assassination, had sought to reconcile his people to his own morganatic marriage by associating it with the grant of a Constitution to be drawn up by the delegates of the Zemstva, or local provincial councils in each of the 'governments' or provinces, some sixty or more, in the European portion of the Empire.

The new Tzar was a typical old-fashioned Russian, a firm believer in Autocracy and Orthodoxy, which his tutor, the celebrated Constantine Pobiedonostzeff, Procurator of the Holy Synod, or in other words, Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, had taught him to regard as the true and only solid foundations of the Russian Imperial dynasty and State. Himself a younger son, he had been brought up, until after his elder brother's death, as a soldier unconcerned with politics, and his views respecting them, which his detractors were wont to describe as those of a mere 'moujik' or peasant, were crude, narrow and intensely autocratic. Tall, squarely built, with a long fair beard, such as no Russian Tzar had ever worn since those hirsute appendages, so dear to the Russian followers of the 'Old Faith,' had been prohibited by Peter the Great, he was a man of imposing presence. His manner was shy, and his utterances were usually laconic, when at great official receptions he addressed a few remarks, as he passed in front of the diplomatic body, to each successive foreign Ambassador or Minister. It seemed to me that he felt rather bored and kept playing, almost unconsciously, with the medals or other insignia pinned to his broad chest, whilst the Empress, a sister of our Princess of Wales, had a charming smile and a friendly word for whoever was presented. The diplomatic body saw their Majesties comparatively rarely, except at this formal New Year levée, and five days later at the feast of the Epiphany, which in Russia commemorates not merely, as with us, the visit of the Three Kings of the East to Bethlehem, but also our Lord's baptism in Jordan, which is accordingly celebrated by the blessing of the frozen river Neva by the clergy.

The Imperial family were of course always present

at the great Court balls in the Winter Palace, the most magnificent spectacles of the kind which, I think, I have ever seen, as well as the smaller dances at the so-called Hermitage, which in some respects were more brilliant. On these occasions, a supper for the Court and the diplomatic body was provided in a huge conservatory, artificially heated and filled with splendid palm trees from the shores of the Mediterranean. At its farther end was a raised platform, and on it, at a kind of 'high table,' resembling that of an Oxford or Cambridge College hall, the Empress, the Grand Dukes and their wives, as well as the heads of foreign diplomatic missions, had their supper. The other male guests and the ladies they took in found places at one or other of the numerous smaller round tables which filled the room from one end to another. When all were seated, the Tzar strolled into the room and sat down in the first empty chair at one of the ordinary tables, next, perhaps, to some guest of no particular dignity or importance, and remained there, partaking of refreshments and chatting with his immediate neighbours till the Empress and his family left their own 'high table' and returned for the last few dances to the ball-room.

I recollect, at one of these Court balls, a comic incident, far from pleasant to its unlucky hero. A *cotillon* was going on, and the male dancers were running about in all directions to find chairs for their respective partners. The Emperor was standing in the crowd, leaning with both his hands on the back of a chair, when a hot and excited young subaltern, who wanted a seat for his girl partner, rushed up somewhat rudely, tore the chair from the imperial grasp, and bore it off in triumph to the damsel, herself a horror-stricken witness of its seizure. Alexander III stared at the couple

with some surprise, but said nothing until this particular dance was over. Then he sent for the terrified offender, who had only just realized the serious nature of his blunder, and asked him what he meant by roughly whisking off his Sovereign's seat in so unceremonious a fashion. The poor youth was ready to sink into the ground, and perhaps saw himself tramping as an exile through the snow-covered wastes of Siberia. 'I beg your Majesty's pardon,' he stammered, 'I did not recognize you. I only looked at your uniform and thought you were a mere ordinary (prostoi) general.' Alexander III surveyed him from head to foot in silence for a minute or so, which must, to the hapless boy, have seemed almost an hour. Then he muttered the word 'Durak' (fool), and turned away, leaving the unlucky chair-snatcher by himself, a picture of abject discomfort and distress.

The Russian Foreign Office, with whose rulers our Embassy was called upon to deal, was situated in the Alexander Square, and thus in the immediate neighbourhood of the Winter Palace. It was in those days under the control of M. de Giers, an amiable and polite elderly statesman, whose family was of Teutonic or Baltic origin. Two of his sons were afterwards colleagues of my own, one of them at Jassy in Roumania and the other, many years later, at Brussels. His chief assistant was Monsieur Vlangaly, who usually acted for him in his absence; but Oriental questions were invariably referred to the Head of the Asiatic Department, Monsieur Zinovieff, who had spent many years in the East, and more especially in Persia. His penetrating eyes and sharp features suggested acuteness and cunning; and like so many other Russians, trained in the particular school, he was very secretive and cautious. A good deal of miscellaneous work was

done by Baron Jomini, a charming old gentleman, a descendant of the great tactician and a master of the purest eighteenth-century French. His skill in the production of French diplomatic notes was due, I imagine, to Prince Gortchakoff, who was himself an ideal draftsman, and enjoyed the composition of State papers and their perusal, when he had given them those final touches, with so keen and artistic a relish that he was described as 'le Narcisse de l'encrier.' A subordinate who could combine in his dispatches eloquent composition with witty criticism and humorous illustration, was certain of advancement, and it was said that M. Catacazi, a Phanariot Secretary in the Russian diplomatic service, had obtained his promotion by a dispatch describing the death and funeral of his Chief, a comparatively little-known Minister in some South American State. The sudden fatal illness, the closing hours, the grief of colleagues, the crowds lining the route traversed by the sad procession, were all feelingly depicted, but the sting of the dispatch, like the rattlesnake's, lay in the tail. 'Ce fut ainsi,' so the polished writer concluded, 'que ce respectable fonctionnaire, en rendant le dernier soupir, rendit un dernier service à sa patrie.'

Nor was this love of French, when I first went to St. Petersburg, confined to the diplomatic service, which had long been in the habit of regarding it much as the mediæval clergy regarded Latin. The older generation of the Russian aristocracy spoke it much as it had been spoken in the days of the Empress Catherine, when Russian was deemed only fit for menials and moujiks. Alexander II always, or more often than not, employed it in his family circle. But it had certain peculiarities which would probably have sounded odd at Paris – the use, for example, of the word 'absolu-

ment,' as in 'sovershenno,' or of 'parfaitement,' instead of 'exactly so,' or 'in a perfect manner.' Alexander III, on his accession, had introduced the custom of talking Russian in his family, in his Court and in his army, and the rising generation applauded and followed his example. Older men, who remembered the days of Nicholas I, were ill at ease, but pretended to approve a change of fashion which they could not prevent. I remember, at one of the first dinner parties at which I was present at St. Petersburg, hearing M. Vlangaly, the high official of the Foreign Office already mentioned, observe to a pretty Russian lady who had been conversing in her native language with her neighbour, 'Madame, il est vraiment charmant de vous entendre parler si parfaitement le russe.' The fashion spread rapidly, but the employment of Russian in correspondence, as well as in conversation, had probably not become universal, at least among the upper classes, when the Emperor Nicholas II began to reign.

Every Wednesday afternoon M. de Giers received the official visits of the foreign Ambassadors and Envoys. Their doyen or dean was General Schweinitz, an old Prussian officer of dignified manners, married to an American lady. Count Wolkenstein, his Austrian colleague, was a typical representative of the Ballplatz, white-bearded and courteous, with a clever literary wife, herself a German, who, without being exactly a blue-stocking, preferred art and music to social gossip, and was devoted to literature and to Wagner. General Appert, the French representative, was universally respected, but got involved in a dispute with M. de Stoetwegen, the Dutch Minister, a touchy man somewhat quick to wrath when his own personal dignity was at stake. Its original cause was a

frivolous one, due to the refusal of Sir Edward and Lady Thornton, who then represented Great Britain, to attend a dance given by him in Lent, a scruple deemed by the Dutch Envoy ridiculous in Protestants, and only affected in order to curry favour with the Russians. General Appert and the Belgian Minister pointed out to him, in vain, that he should respect the religious sentiments of a colleague, even if he did not personally share them, and he thereupon flew into a temper and declared himself ready to fight them both. The scandal of such a duel was averted by the intervention of common friends, but the offence which he fancied had been given him long rankled in his mind, and when General Appert, a year or so later, was recalled from St. Petersburg, he burst into a party at which the members of the French Embassy were present, exclaiming, 'Il y a une justice sur cette terre! Il y a un Dieu dans Israel! les Apperts sont degommés.'

He was, as a matter of fact, a skilful duellist with both pistol and rapier, and was said to have killed, when a younger man, several antagonists whom he had challenged to mortal combat. The Italian Ambassador, Count Greppi, I have already mentioned in my description of the diplomatic corps at Madrid. The United States were represented by a charming old gentleman named Lothrop, whose pretty daughter, as he spoke no French, now and then, in the absence of his secretary, acted as an interpreter when he called upon M. de Giers. He came from the Western State of Michigan, and had little experience of Europe, but when, so he told us, he was offered the Embassy, with a telegram from his native State saying, 'Michigan expects it of you,' he decided to shoulder the uncongenial burden. Another pleasant member, a friend to every one, was the Dane, M. Kiœr, who, with his wife and daughters,

was at home every Sunday to their colleagues, and who, representing as he did the native country of the Empress, was exceedingly well informed as to all that was taking place in the palace and in high official circles.

Soon after my arrival I set to work to learn Russian, for an extra allowance of £100 was bestowed by the Foreign Office on every young diplomatist who had passed an examination, colloquial and literary, in that language. I employed as my teacher a young Russian of about my own age, who had been a student, if I am not mistaken, at the University of Kharkoff, as well as of that at St. Petersburg. He was a pleasant companion and quite an efficient teacher, and I soon began to make progress under his tuition. But what interested me most in our intercourse was the fact that he felt, in common, as I afterwards discovered, with so many young men in his position, a certain sympathy with the ideals of the Nihilists. One of his reasons was that his father or grandfather who had been a 'pomiestchik,' or country squire, in the forest zone of northern Russia, had been ruined by the edict of Alexander II abolishing the serfdom of the peasantry, and had received very little or no compensation for the crushing financial losses which he had been forced in consequence to face. It is indeed remarkable that in Russia, as in India, revolutionary movements have often been promoted by so-called progressive measures, and especially advanced forms of education, for which a primitive society is unprepared. Boys, the sons of very poor country clergymen, apothecaries, or petty traders, were encouraged, by the educational system which had developed in the days of Alexander II, to gain 'scholarships' or 'bourses' from the Department of Education. This enabled them to attend the

nearest University, with a view to rising from their own station in life to one offering much more attractive prospects. But inasmuch as, in a state where corruption is so rampant, a poor man starts heavily handicapped, these boys too often found, with a sentiment of intelligible disgust, that posts in the public service were by no means always fairly distributed. Their disappointment festered into active disaffection. They began in fact to sympathize with the wild ideas derived from the ravings of extremists like Bakunin, and thus became objects of suspicion to the University authorities, themselves officials in the pay of the State. They were moreover spied upon by the secret police, perhaps expelled from the University, or, to use a later term, 'blacklisted' as dangerous enemies of public order. One of them told me, when he visited a fellow-student at a South Russian University, that he had noticed a drunken man lying prostrate across his friend's doorstep, which he had to approach with care, in order not to tread on the boozy sleeper. On relating this experience to his friend, the latter laughed and merely said, 'Oh, no, he isn't drunk! He is only a police spy. In these hot summer months we have to keep all the windows of my two rooms open, and as they are both in the basement, he can take down my conversation with my friends and earn money by telling the police. But we are, of course, careful to treat him politely as a friendly "habitual inebriate," and I don't myself think he would tell any low-down tales or unkind stories against us.'

My young teacher was very anxious that I should get him some Socialistic literature from Berlin, but this I thought impossible, belonging as I did to our Embassy at the Russian Court, and censored as all these works were by the police. I had bought a few in

Germany myself to satisfy my own curiosity, and these I allowed him to read in my rooms, but not to remove, as I saw sometimes at his lodgings fellow-students of similar sentiments, with whom I vainly argued from my own British and Tory standpoints. The great hero of these young malcontents appeared to be Bakunin, who, so far as I could ascertain what he was driving at, was an apostle of mere destructive anarchy, only fit for a criminal madhouse.

Though the Nihilists had for some time past been inactive, they made, on March 23, 1887, a somewhat serious attempt on the life of the Emperor and Empress, on their way back from the annual memorial service, held in the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul, for the late Tzar, Alexander II. Three youths, University students, had inserted two dynamite cartridges, each containing two pounds of explosives, and 250 cubes of strychnine into the covers of two volumes of the Russian Criminal Code, with the dramatic intention of 'slaying the tyrant with the instruments of his own oppression' by hurling them into his coach. The somewhat nervous and restlessly anxious manner in which they paced up and down the street in the neighbourhood of the Anitchkoff Palace attracted the attention of the police, and they were arrested before the Imperial couple started for the Cathedral. It was not until late in the afternoon that the news of the contemplated crime was known, though, even then, in official circles only. The day was a Sunday. Our Chancery had a holiday, and it was only on returning there to dress for a dinner party that Sir Robert Morier instructed me to cipher a telegram to London respecting the abortive plot to Queen Victoria. I arrived a little late at my host's house, and sat next to a member of the Imperial household. Although I half

expected from him some allusion to the attempt on his Sovereign's life, the incident was not even mentioned, and the Russian guests talked of nothing but an actress who had just appeared in a new play. On the following day the *Official Messenger* or *Pravitelovienny Viestnik* announced the attempted regicide, and my courtier friend, whom I met in the street, observed to me with a knowing look, 'I suppose you were so late at dinner last night, because you were telegraphing to London the news of the attempt upon their Majesties. I could have given you, had you asked me, some interesting details.' 'Why didn't you?' I asked. 'Well, you see,' he replied, 'I was not supposed to know it!' The *Pravitelovienny Viestnik* (the official newspaper) had not yet spoken.

Two days later we were all invited to meet their Majesties at an evening fête at the French Embassy. The Empress seemed, nor was this surprising, somewhat nervous and agitated, but her husband was in excellent spirits and expressed, I remember, a warm appreciation of some strawberries which had reached him from some southern clime. He was, it seemed, an absolute fatalist, believing firmly in predestination and convinced that it was foolish to attempt to avoid danger.

He was not, however, deterred by the danger which he had incurred from the ultra-Conservative policy to which he had adhered from the beginning of his reign, for his fatalism, based upon a deep religious faith, and his conviction that the maintenance of his country's own traditional institutions in Church and State was a sacred duty, only served to confirm him in the course which he followed ever since his father's murder had called him to the throne. Pobiedonostzeff's Slavonic and Orthodox policy was accentuated. The

Church prohibition of mixed marriages, when one party was a dissenter from the Russian Orthodox faith, which Alexander II had repealed, was revived, and Catholic or Lutheran converts to Orthodoxy were forbidden, under penalties, to return to their earlier religious creeds. Tolstoi, at the same time, empowered the Ministry of the Interior to eject Protestant incumbents from their parishes in the Baltic provinces. One secondary and temporary effect of the Nihilist assassination plot was to check for a time the Franco-Russian approximation, which had been indirectly fostered by the tendency exhibited at Vienna, and in a somewhat lesser degree at Berlin, to discourage the Russification of Bulgaria.

Some of the girl students appeared to be equally 'thorough.' Thus when the Nihilist Solovief attempted in 1879 to murder Alexander II, his wife was arrested as a probable or possible accomplice. She cleared her character, so at least I have been informed, for I was not in Russia at the time, explaining that she had not seen her husband for several years, and had in fact only gone through the marriage ceremony – which she personally deemed a foolish mummery – in order to be able to travel, as his wife, from Kharkoff to St. Petersburg, in which latter city she wished to prosecute certain higher studies. They had, she added, separated at the 'Nicholas Railway Station,' the real object of their matrimonial union having been now effected, and had never met since. She was, she is said to have added, truly sorry that her old friend Solovief was to be hanged, for although a very poor philosopher and mathematician, his consent to a temporary marriage had helped her at a somewhat awkward moment. I have indeed heard of cases of female students who have made even more painful sacrifices to their

passionate craving for knowledge. One of these, unable to afford residence at St. Petersburg in the capacity of a private student, took out, it was said, a yellow ticket as a licensed professional prostitute and spent her nights earning money in a brothel, whilst devoting all the hours in the daytime, not claimed by repose, to the study of philosophy and history.

Meanwhile political events of some importance had been taking place in England, where I had gone in the summer of 1886 for a short holiday, for the Gladstone Home Rule Bill had been rejected, and, forgetful of the rule that a diplomatic or other permanent official may not meddle in party politics, I had been so infected with the virus during the previous years that I could not refrain from once more plunging into them. A college friend, Mr. Marriott, afterwards long a member for Oxford City, was standing for Rochdale, and Lord Salisbury's eldest son, an old Eton and Oxford contemporary of mine, was a candidate for the Darwen division of Lancashire. I offered my services as a helper to them both, and most improperly, as afterwards I was obliged to admit to my conscience, spoke and canvassed eagerly in both contests. At Rochdale we had little chance, for the sitting member, Mr. Potter, was a tower of strength. He was indeed as difficult to shake or even move as the Great Pyramid, and our own best Tory supporters were of opinion that not even such a windfall as the decision of Mr. Bright to oppose Home Rule, which we used for all it was worth, would dislodge him from a seat so long held against many successive attacks. This prediction proved true – our frantic efforts failed to capture Rochdale. I doubt whether the academical eloquence of raw youths such as myself fresh from Oxford and unfamiliar with the interests and needs of a great

industrial constituency, could ever have persuaded the intelligent and hard-headed Lancashire operatives who formed the majority of the voters, to dismiss so old and well-tried a member.

In the Darwen division the position was less difficult and showed, especially in Blackburn and its suburbs, a certain Orange Low Church and anti-Irish Home Rule element, which was in some degree neutralized in the northern and more rural part of the division by a strong Roman Catholic party, centring in the great Jesuit College at Stonyhurst. We interviewed its polite and learned fathers, but, I need hardly say, got little out of them. One of them indeed assured me, without turning a hair, that his order had nothing to do with politics, was in fact entirely neutral as between opposing parties, and was therefore precluded from any action of a nature to influence elections. He uttered a deprecatory phrase about the Duke of Norfolk, in reply to an undiplomatic suggestion of my own that that nobleman was not merely a great Tory, but also a great representative Catholic. Had female suffrage been in force, we should, I believe, have completely swept the board, for the factory girls as a body were keen supporters of Cranborne and cheered him whenever he appeared. He was in fact returned on the polling day by a smaller majority than we had hoped for.

My enthusiastic devotion to Lord Salisbury as the greatest of modern Conservative statesmen, and the interest in home politics which participation in these contests had aroused, gave me an eager desire for a parliamentary as distinct from a diplomatic career. My great-aunt, Lady Howard de Walden, to some extent encouraged that ambition. She expressed her willingness to give me the financial assistance which my parents could not afford. But when the new

Tory Government was formed in June, 1886, and Lord Salisbury became once more Prime Minister, the Foreign Office, in which I had served under him in 1885, was assigned to Lord Iddesleigh, whom I did not myself know, and who appointed as his précis-writer Mr. Hopwood, an experienced Foreign Office clerk, a good deal my senior, and thus possessing a much better claim than mine.

I consulted Lady Salisbury as to whether I should go into politics, and, as I now think, she very wisely discouraged the idea: 'You have,' she said, 'if you persevere in it, the prospect of a good diplomatic career, and it would not repay you to exchange it for the uncertainties of politics. My advice to you is, as you have, so I understand, begun to master the Russian language, to return to your post at St. Petersburg, which is likely for a time to be of considerable interest, and may open a pathway to others of even greater importance to your future career. Politics and the duration of Cabinets are uncertainties: our own present term of office may prove brief.' I recognized this to be wise and sound advice, and felt moreover a sense of obligation to my kind chief Sir Robert Morier, under whom I had served for several years, and for whom I had a genuine affection. I accordingly told Lady Howard that I had decided for the present to stick to my profession, and I found that she entirely approved of my decision to return to my duties in Russia.

As it became somewhat difficult to pursue my Russian studies amidst all the occupations of St. Petersburg, Chancery work, winter sports at the ice hills, afternoon calls and evening parties and dances, I migrated for a short time in the early winter of 1886 to Moscow, and thence to a little town, about forty miles to the north-east, known as Sergievo Troitsa, one

of the most famous of the Russian sanctuaries, to which a training college had long been attached for youths wishing to enter the clerical profession. I had been given an introduction to the Abbot, who bore the Spartan name of Leonidas, and who was, like all Russian college dignataries, very genial and hospitable to strangers. He introduced me to a lay teacher at the seminary, with whom I worked steadily every day. I got to know one of its students, with whom I used to take frequent walks in the snow-clad forests surrounding the little town of Sergievo, our only common language being Latin. The seminarists entering the ranks of the secular clergy began, as in England, as curates, and before their admission as deacons had to let their hair and beards grow long, a process which one of them – a friend of my own at that moment undergoing it – declared to be troublesome, apt in summer to give a man a headache. As these scholars were, however, expected to marry before actually receiving priest's orders, they usually became engaged to a daughter of the parson – in Russian 'Batushka' or 'Little Father' whom they served as curates, and thus contributed an unusually large family to the daily growing numbers of the great Levitical caste – or rather the whole section of it – excluded from promotion to such offices as bishoprics and abbeys, which were still restricted to the 'Black' or monastic clergy.

My time at Sergievo Troitsa was not wasted, and by the time I left it I had acquired a sufficient knowledge of both colloquial and literary Russian to pass my examination in the language and thus earn another £100 a year. My examiner was our Consul, Mr. Michell, and I was assured that my performance had been quite creditable. But many years later, while on my way out to Persia with my wife, I found that I had

quite forgotten Russian and could not recollect the simplest words. Strangely enough, after a few hours in this new and yet to me familiar atmosphere, the old sounds re-exerted their influence: a dormant cell seemed to awaken in my brain, and in a day or so I could once more converse with ease. I doubt my power to do so now, without some weeks' sojourn among Russians.

One effect of my residence at so important a seat of Russian religious learning was to arouse in me for the first time an interest in the Russian Church and its sects. I went, amongst other places, to a curious little 'skit,' or monastic cell, between Sergievo and Moscow, founded by an illiterate old peasant who had only somewhat recently died. This man was a visionary of the type of Fox or Bunyan, who believed himself to be a recipient of divine revelations and had left his family in order to found, with a few enthusiastic brethren, a smaller monastic cell or 'skit.' Here he practised every sort of unpleasant austerity, rolling naked in the snow or breaking through the hard ice in winter, and wearing, when not otherwise employed, heavy chains, which galled his limbs and impeded the freedom of his movements. Some pious and wealthy Moscow merchants who had visited his cold and squalid cell appear to have fancied that he might, if judiciously financed, attract the visits and donations of godly pilgrims. Accordingly they built for him a chapel and somewhat less uncomfortable quarters, when numerous visitors came to touch and kiss his chains, so that, in the words of a well-known English epitaph on a defunct publican:

'His son pursues the business still –
Obedient to the Heavenly will!'

It would not, however, be fair to judge these simple appeals to primitive asceticism and piety as mere frauds. There is in them a certain real genuineness which one must have lived in the East, whether Moslem or Christian, in order to comprehend or even contemplate with sympathy. In connection with these rather odd studies I first got into touch with the Staroviertsi, or 'People of the ancient Faith,' who seceded from the Russian Church in the seventeenth century. I was asked by a friend to buy for him an ancient icon or sacred picture, and I visited several shops with this object. I then became acquainted with the chief ritual ground of contention between the Russian Established Church and the adherents of the 'ancient Faith,' namely the mode of making the sign of the cross, which the supporters of the Church, since the days of Nicon, do with three, and the Dissenters with two, fingers only. I had not grasped the importance of this distinction till in the prosecution of these inquiries I attended a service of the 'Bezpopovtsi' or 'Priestless Old Believers' and was asked by the elders, who saw that I was not one of themselves, to abstain during the ceremony from making the sign of the cross in the modern fashion. If I were to do so, the Devil might under its influence come in and disturb the efficacy of their rites. For the Old Believers held that the sign of the cross with two fingers typified the union of the Divine and human natures in the Crucified Redeemer, and that the 'Post-Niconian' Church of Russia had in consequence lost the Apostolical succession, inasmuch as it is guilty, in using the three fingers, of the 'Patripassian' heresy, or belief in the crucifixion, together with the person of the Son, of the Father and the Holy Ghost as well. If it is argued that a good Christian may use one finger without thereby

becoming a Unitarian, or all five without becoming a polytheist, it is answered that these forms were deliberately altered with heretical intention by Nicon, and that those who employ them incur with that apostate the peril of eternal damnation.

Faithful to these rigid principles, the 'Priestless people' do not celebrate the Holy Communion, and some of them doubt the lawfulness of marriage, since, strictly speaking, it ought to be solemnized by a priest. Some of them baptize only in rain-water, on the ground that all the rivers and pools of water throughout Russia are defiled by the Niconian apostasy. Others object to the use of passports, as bearing the image of an apostate Emperor, and all condemn the use of the razor on the chin, which defaces the image of God, as illustrated in the person of Christ. 'Where,' they say, 'will you stand at the Day of Judgment, among the shaven Pagans and Papists, or among the bearded Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles?' 'Can you,' one of them asked me, 'cite a single shaven saint?' And when I mentioned St. George, the Victory-bringer (Pobiedonosets), the patron of Russia and of England alike, he replied that he had 'proved his point, for every one knew that St. George was a soldier, and had preferred death to using the razor, which his sergeants tried to thrust into his hands.' Pobiedonestzeff himself was desirous of effecting a union with the class of Nonconformists known as 'Edinoviertsi.' They believed the Apostolical succession to have survived the Niconian schism, and to reside, though in this they were not quite at one, in the post-Niconian Church. They objected, of course, to its mode of making the sign of the cross; but the Priestless Old Believers were utterly uncompromising and were unwilling to partake of food or drink with adherents

of the Established Russian Church or any other heretics.

In addition to these rigid old ecclesiastical Conservatives, Russia contained many newer sects of what may be called ultra-Protestant tendencies, and to them as non-Russian he was a good deal less indulgent than to the conservative schismatics of the 'Ancient Faith.' Some of these were German 'Stundists,' so called from the 'Stunde' (hour) for which their service lasted. They were partly of West European or Lutheran tendencies, and these had received a good deal of encouragement from a well-known Englishman, Lord Radstock, a saintly Evangelical lay preacher, whom I myself knew and greatly respected. A more curious sect was that of the 'Molokani' or milk-drinkers of the Caucasus, with whom I was afterwards brought into rather curious contact while travelling in Transcaucasia. They appear to be in reality literal Bible Christians, regarding the rules of the Old Testament as not less binding than those of the New, for they asked me, when I entered one of their villages, if I were a doctor, as the Molokani elders had just stoned to death a man or a woman – I am not quite sure which – convicted of adultery and a medical authority was wanted for an inquest to be held upon the corpse.

I return, however, from the story of my Russian studies in these various curious fields to the more serious political questions which engaged the attention of the Embassy, mainly in Central Asia and Bulgaria. In the former region the Penjdeh incident of 1885 had been settled to the mutual satisfaction of both Governments by the arbitration of the King of Denmark, the father of the Empress of Russia and of our own Princess of Wales. A commission presided over by Sir West Ridgeway, who was afterwards Minister at Tangier,

was now busily engaged in the task of fixing with a Russian delegation the final line of the Russo-Afghan frontier.

The Bulgarian question was much more difficult, owing largely to the personal antipathy with which the Russian Emperor regarded his kinsman and namesake, Prince Alexander of Hesse-Battenberg. The latter was the son of Prince Charles Alexander of Hesse and of a Polish lady named Hauk, who became his morganatic wife. It was rumoured by Darmstadt scandalmongers that Prince Charles Alexander's real father was not the Grand Duke of Hesse, but a charming French *emigré* noble whose name was Monsieur de Grancy and with whom the Grand Duchess was said to have fallen in love. So much gossip circulated on the subject that the Russian Minister at Darmstadt thought it right to warn his Imperial master that his son's future Hessian bride might bring into the Russian Imperial house a strain of French noble, but not Royal or Electoral blood. Nicholas was asserted to have answered that his Imperial house was overloaded with German connections, and that he personally felt no objection to the Grancy relationship, even if, which was very uncertain, there was anything in it but gossip. The future Alexander II thus became engaged to a Hessian bride. Prince Charles Alexander, the new Empress's brother, visited her in Russia, and then fell in love with and married a Mademoiselle Van Hauk, a Polish lady-in-waiting of his sister's, and a girl of remarkable charm. He contracted a morganatic marriage with her, notwithstanding the warning of many of his friends, and the Grand Ducal Court of Darmstadt recognized the union and conferred upon the lady the title of Princess of Hesse-Battenberg. One of his other sons by her, Prince Henry, married Princess Beatrice of

England and died on military service in West Africa. Another, Prince Louis, attained high distinction in the British navy; and a third, Prince Alexander, was selected as the first sovereign of a self-governing Bulgaria by the Tzar Alexander II. It had been assumed at St. Petersburg that he would be a mere Russian satrap, as obedient to the Russian advisers who represented the Tzar at his Court as was the Egyptian Khedive Tewfik Pasha to England.

From the beginning to the close of his reign the new Bulgarian Prince found himself confronted with difficulties. The Conservative section of his new subjects, and especially the clergy, who had thrown off their allegiance to the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople, were devoted to Russia and deeply grateful to the Tzar for having rescued them from the Ottoman yoke. But there was a strong and growing Liberal party, formed by men, most of whom had been trained in the American Roberts College at Constantinople or, what was still more dangerous, in Russian Universities, strongly imbued with Radicalism, and even Nihilism. The Russian Foreign Office had never contemplated the development of such subversive tendencies amongst its 'Bratushki,' or 'Little Brothers,' in the Balkans, and as the Prince could not work with the Bulgarian Liberals, who in 1881 had obtained a majority in the new National Assembly, or Sobranie, he appointed a provisional government under his Russian adviser General Ehrenroth. The Russians, when they bestowed on Bulgaria a democratic form of government, did not really mean the gift to be taken seriously. 'Les constitutions,' remarked Prince Dondukoff Korsakoff, the cynical creator of the Bulgarian one, 'sont comme les femmes. Elles ne demandent qu'a être violées.' He probably hoped to fish successfully in the

troubled waters of party politics at Sofia, very much as the Empress Catherine had utilized and played, in the Stockholm Diet, on the rivalries of the 'Hats' and the 'Caps.'

Still less did the Russian Government approve the union effected between Bulgaria and Eastern Roumelia, which was legalized by the Tophane conference in 1885. It seemed likely, under Anglo-Austrian influences, to develop in Bulgaria an inclination to resist Russian ascendancy. The Polish blood which ran in Prince Alexander's veins was perhaps another element in the Emperor's growing distrust of him: for like the gallant young Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, to whom he bore in many ways a marked resemblance, his mother was of Polish descent. The Russian Government, in proportion as his successes were applauded in London and at Vienna, became more and more dissatisfied and its agents more inclined, at first secretly, and then openly, to work against him.

Towards the beginning of August, 1886, shortly after I had got back to my post, my father, who had given up his command at Bombay, came out to St. Petersburg (which the young Emperor William II had recently visited, causing some surprise by his request for the suspension of the Court mourning on the death of his father and predecessor, the Emperor Frederick III). His duty was to represent the British Government at some military manœuvres near Krasnoe Selo. On the evening of August 5, 1886, while he was dining with his Russian hosts and other military colleagues, the news reached them that a sudden revolution had just broken out at Sofia, and that Prince Alexander had been arrested and deposed. I at once sent on this news to Sir Robert Morier, who instructed me to go

on the following morning to ascertain the true facts from Count Bulow, at that time in charge of the German Embassy, in the absence of his chief General Schweinitz.

On being shown into his study, I found him conversing with the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, Count Hohenlohe, to whose questions on these rumours he replied that he had as yet no reliable information. I was rising to leave, saying that I had come on the same errand, when he made a sign to me to stop: 'Do not go,' he whispered. 'I will tell you all about it, but only for your Chief's private information.' When Hohenlohe had left, he related how Prince Alexander had been forced in the small hours of the morning to abdicate, driven off to the Danube and landed at Reni, where that river divides Russia from Roumania. Why Bulow was more reserved with my Austrian colleague than with myself I cannot say, but in view of the ill-feeling that had so long existed between Prince Bismarck and Sir Robert Morier, he may have deemed the occasion a good one to show his friendly confidence in the British Ambassador, more especially as the event was one whose publication in a few hours' time might already be discounted as certain.

The triumph of the Russian party in Bulgaria, led by Zankoff and the Metropolitan Clement, was for the moment apparently complete; but a day or two later the scene changed. The troops at Philippopolis were hostile to the authors of the successful conspiracy at Sofia, and two patriotic Bulgarians, Stambuloff, the President of the Sobranie, and Mutkuroff, who commanded the forces in Eastern Roumelia, effected a counter-revolution at Philippopolis and invited the Prince to resume his authority over a loyal, a grateful and a solidly united Bulgarian people. He landed a

few days later on Bulgarian soil at Rustchuk, and was met by the Consuls and Vice-Consuls of all the Great Powers, including Russia, all of whom he decided to receive in succession, after a State luncheon to be given by the local authorities in honour of his happy restoration.

Two years later, when I was acting as British Chargé d'Affaires at Bucharest, M. Stambuloff, then Bulgarian Prime Minister, described to me what had actually taken place at Rustchuk. A banquet was given by the Ministers and local magnates in the restored Prince's honour. But he was still in a nervous and excited condition and greatly shaken by the thought that he had mortally offended his powerful kinsman the Emperor of Russia, to whom he desired at once to telegraph. Stambuloff begged him to keep calm and to take no hasty step of any kind. He then, unattended by any of his Ministers, received the foreign Consuls, each separately, in private audience, among them the acting Russian representative, a quite obscure and insignificant young official. During this interview, the Prince enlarged on his devotion to the Tzar, to whom he said that he owed his throne and whom nothing would induce him to offend. Should his Imperial Majesty really wish him to abdicate, he would do so without hesitation. 'If these,' said the Russian diplomatist, 'are your Highness's real sentiments, why not throw yourself on the Tzar's generosity, and telegraph to assure him that, in this grave political crisis, you will be solely guided by his views.' A telegram to St. Petersburg was accordingly drafted between them, in which the Prince gave expression to these sentiments. 'From Russia,' his message ended, 'I received my princely crown: into the Emperor's hands, if he really so wishes, I am willing to resign it.'

The telegram was answered by the Emperor Alexander III in one which a diplomatist accredited to his Court described as 'la réponse d'un ours plutôt que d'un homme de cœur.' 'He could not,' he proceeded, 'approve of the Prince's return to Bulgaria.' There was thus no course open to him but to bow to this implacable decision, notwithstanding the entreaties of his new Ministry, and he started at once for Sofia to take a final leave of his devoted subjects, and to appoint as Regents, pending the election of his successor, Stambuloff, Mutkuroff and another less powerful statesman named Jivekoff Karaveloff, and then quitted Bulgaria for ever.

The new Regents, as deriving their authority from a tainted source, were not recognized by the Russian Government, which officially termed them 'Pseudo-Regents' (Lje Regenti) and it proceeded to dispatch General Kaulbars, a German Baltic Baron, to prepare a fresh general election, with a view to the choice of a new Prince. I knew Kaulbars, although only slightly. Smooth-spoken, bald-headed, with a short, dark beard, he appeared to me conciliatory and courteous, but beneath this apparent moderation he concealed a somewhat obstinate temper.

He began by refusing altogether to recognize as legitimate authorities the Regents appointed by the Prince, and in fact stumped the country against them. After various candidates had been unsuccessfully sounded, one of them, a Caucasian chief who still called himself 'Prince of Mingrelia,' was supported by Russia, but his qualification as successor to the gallant victor of Slivnitza was hardly happy. His one important political act would appear to have been the sale of his tiny Caucasian principality to Russia in return for a payment in cash. Prince Waldemar of Denmark was

eventually elected by the Sobranie or Bulgarian Parliament, but he prudently declined the offer of this now unstable throne. At length a Bulgarian deputation sent to Vienna came across Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, a grandson on his mother's side of the French King Louis Philippe, and a kinsman of the Royal houses of Belgium and Great Britain. His chief disqualification in Russian eyes was most probably his Catholic religion, for Bulgaria, notwithstanding the schism which separated it from the Phanar, and Monsieur Zankof's former flirtations with the Papacy, as less objectionable than the Patriarchate of Constantinople, was nevertheless strongly Orthodox, and without himself abjuring the faith of Rome, he eventually decided to bring up his own son and heir in that of his future subjects. The Orthodox rebaptism of 'Baby Boris,' as the papers jocosely termed it – it was, I fancy, really immersion followed by unction with consecrated oil – helped, however, to reconcile Bulgaria to Russia and thus, indirectly, to readjust the balance of power in the Near East.

My own sympathies were frankly and strongly pro-Bulgarian, and I suggested to Sir Robert Morier all sorts of foolish schemes for dispatching a British fleet to Varna, in order to prevent an armed Russian occupation, which could not be effected by land except through Roumania or Turkey. I even drafted a telegram to that effect to the Queen's private secretary, Sir Henry Ponsonby; for Her Majesty was strongly anti-Russian and zealous in Prince Alexander's cause. Sir Robert was very patient with me: he understood my pro-Bulgarian sentiments, but he knew that they would never commend themselves to so cautious a statesman as Lord Salisbury. 'My dear boy,' he said to me, 'I began my own career as a wit-

ness of Palmerston's bluster, just before our abandonment of Denmark; and I am not anxious to see that humiliating betrayal repeated a second time in the Balkans.'

But although Lord Salisbury would not have moved a soldier to help Bulgaria, both his Government and that of Vienna thought it right to express in strong language their disapproval of the revolutionary intrigues, and the brutal pressure exercised by Kaulbars and the other Russian agents in Bulgaria in their efforts to pack her National Assembly. His own vigorous language on this subject, at the Mansion House banquet on November 9, 1886, gave deep offence to the Emperor of Russia. Sir Robert had just issued invitations to a dinner at our Embassy in honour of the Foreign Minister Monsieur de Giers. On the day fixed for it, the 'guest of the evening' was suddenly summoned to the Emperor's palace at Gatchina, a short distance from St. Petersburg, and informed by his Sovereign, that in view of Lord Salisbury's bitter public attack on Russian policy in the Balkans, he would prefer that his own Foreign Minister should not dine that night at the British Embassy. M. de Giers conveyed to Sir Robert, in evasive but quite clear diplomatic language, the Imperial prohibition. 'Je regrette, mon cher Ambassadeur,' he wrote, 'qu'en raison d'un refroidissement, résultant de ma visite à Sa Majesté à Gatchina, je me trouve empêché d'assister au dîner auquel vous avez eu l'aimabilité de m'inviter.' The absence of the guest of the evening, owing to a chill, which he admitted to be 'political,' for a reason which all St. Petersburg soon knew, was, of course, most unfortunate. But so great was the popularity enjoyed throughout Russian society by Sir Robert and Lady Morier and their charming and talented daughter, that

the Foreign Minister's example was not followed by any of its unofficial members, all of whom were moreover much too well informed not to know that the Ambassador was in no way responsible for the British Prime Minister's invectives. The reception which followed the dinner was a striking tribute to his personal popularity. The Russians knew how hard he had worked for bringing about a better feeling between the two countries and how bitterly the success of his efforts had been resented by Prince Bismarck, whom they knew, in his capacity as the leading spirit of the Austro-German alliance, regarded them with greater fear than love. For the Berlin reptile Press, well aware of the popularity enjoyed at St. Petersburg by the British Ambassador and the services which he had rendered, under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, to the cause of Anglo-Russian friendship, had once more begun to attack him with excessive bitterness, and had affected to see in a courteous visit paid by him, when Minister at Madrid, to Marshal Bazaine, who was living there in poverty and exile, a fresh proof of hostility to Germany. It was characteristic of his frank courage that he resolved, in this connection, to tackle the Iron Chancellor himself.

The remainder of the reign of Alexander III was one of reactionary ultra-Nationalism in the sphere of domestic policy. Both Count Ignatieff, the brilliant Russian Ambassader at Constantinople, during the period which immediately preceded the Russo-Turkish War of 1877, and Count Tolstoi, who was Minister of the Interior for the past seven years of the new Emperor's reign, alike represented a reaction against the Liberal tendencies of Alexander II. Indeed, after the latter Sovereign's assassination, the Conservative Slavophil Katkoff had gone so far as to advocate in

an article headed 'Domoi' (back home) the abandonment of St. Petersburg as the capital of the Empire, and the transfer of the seat of Government to Moscow, which embodied the traditions of the older Tzars. This reactionary policy was formulated, in more scientific terms, by the famous Procurator of the Holy Synod, or lay Pope of the Russian State Church, Pobiedonostzeff, the tutor and political guide of the Tzar Alexander III. The ancient liberties of Poland had long ago been crushed out of existence; in the Baltic lands no recent armed rebellion had justified any violent methods, for alike in Esthonia, Livonia and Courland, the German semi-feudal aristocracy, the Lutheran clergy, and the great commercial potentates of such cities as Riga and Reval had no means of seriously resisting Russification; nor had earlier Tzars ever attempted it. This ruling class had furnished successive Emperors of Russia with distinguished soldiers and statesmen, such as Diebitch, Kaufmann, Todleben, Nesselrode, and de Giers himself, and had long entertained for them the same kind of loyalty as that felt by the magnates of Bohemia and Hungary for the house of Habsburg before the year 1848. So short-sighted, however, were some of the advisers of Alexander III, and especially Pobiedonostzeff, that they attacked, in their Slavophil fervour, the ancient German University of Dorpat, which had been, ever since its foundation and endowment by Swedish kings, very closely attached to the German Academic Confederacy, its degrees being recognized as equivalent to their own by those of Berlin and of Vienna. Its connection with these homes of Western learning was now abruptly severed; its autonomous institutions were suppressed, its authorities were superseded by Muscovite Tchinoviks, and its historic German

name was replaced by the novel Russian one of 'Yurieff.' The Lettish and other Slav peasantries of the Baltic provinces were encouraged to assert their independence of the Baltic German landholders, and long-haired, bearded Orthodox missionaries were sent out to convert the mainly German-speaking Protestant villagers. In mixed marriages, moreover, the Roman Catholic or Lutheran parties were required to conform to the Russian Church.

More fortunate than Esthonia, Livonia and Courland, the Grand Duchy of Finland was a nominally independent State joined to the Russian Empire, much as Ireland was to England before 1799, by a personal union, ever since its transfer in 1815 by King Charles XIV (Bernadotte) to the Tzar Alexander I. The latter was, however, not Emperor, nor even King, there, for Finland had been severed from the Crown of Sweden without becoming an integral portion of Russia, and the Emperor still bore the new title of 'Grand Duke,' his autocratic powers being formally limited by a constitution resembling that of Sweden, whilst the State Church of which he was the head was not Orthodox but Lutheran. The Governor-General appointed by him was his personal representative, like the Viceroy in Ireland; but he could only legislate with the approval of a 'Diet,' consisting of four 'estates' or 'houses,' that of the clergy, including the representatives of the ancient Swedish University of Abo, the see of the Primate, that of the feudal nobility or knights (the 'Riddar Hus'), that of the burghers or commercial and professional classes, and lastly that of the peasantry, or large landowners and small rural freeholders. This assembly, copied from the old Swedish constitution, was thus somewhat unwieldy for the purposes of reform or ever ordinary legislation.

Each of the four houses could veto any definite proposal, and no Bill could be even introduced without assent of the Senate, a separate body of eminent Finlanders nominated by the Emperor-Grand Duke. Swedish, and in later years Finnish, were recognized official languages, but not Russian. The coinage was Grand Ducal, not Imperial. The local laws were based on old Swedish custom and tradition, supplemented by a series of statutes voted during several centuries by the four Estates and ratified up to 1814 by the successive hereditary Sovereigns of Sweden.

During my stay in Russia, I obtained permission from my chief to visit Helsingfors, the Finnish capital, in order to witness the opening of the ancient Parliament or Diet. The distinct character and autonomy of the Grand Duchy were strikingly marked by the Customs barrier which separated it from Russia proper, and the distinct Finnish coinage which took the place of roubles and copecks, as soon as the frontier had been passed, at a distance of some twenty miles from St. Petersburg. At Helsingfors, with the help of our capable Consul Mr. Cook, I made the acquaintance of numerous prominent Finnish statesmen, with several of whom, notably M. Mechelin, member for the University of Abo in the Diet, and M. Montgomery, a Swede descended from a Scottish ancestor who had fought for Gustavus Adolphus II in the Thirty Years' War, I had many interesting talks.

A day or two after my arrival the opening of the Diet took place. The proceedings commenced at the principal church, with a bilingual Lutheran High Mass at the altar of the cathedral, sung by gorgeously robed priests (without, however, any administration of the Holy Sacrament), after which a black-gowned Bishop ascended the pulpit and delivered two ad-

dresses, one in Finnish and the other in Swedish. We then proceeded to the House of Parliament, when General Bobrikoff, the Tzar's representative as Governor-General, himself standing under a canopied dais, received addresses from each of the Four Estates. The Archbishop of Abo, in canonicals and wearing a rich pectoral cross, made a loyal speech in Finnish on behalf of the clergy and University. The uniformed Marshal of the nobility and another one representing the burghers, in evening dress, spoke in Swedish, whilst he of the peasantry, wearing his best festival costume, addressed the Russian Governor in Finnish. General Bobrikoff's reply to them all was impartially delivered in Russian, and the strange diversity of tongues was very typical of the divisions of class and political feeling then prevalent among the Finnish people. The socially higher classes, the nobles and burghers, were, generally speaking, pro-Swedish and Liberal, while the priesthood, except here and there a prelate or academical professor, and the small proprietors who formed the majority in the Peasant Estate, were pro-Finnish and, in the main, Conservative. Oddly enough, not long before the opening of the Diet, it had been divided into two sections by a proposal to drape certain nude classical statues, which stood in the hall of an important public building. The nobles and burghers opposed this proposal as barbarous, the priests and peasants advocated it as only decent. Whether vice or virtue won the day I cannot recollect, but I have an impression that 'Mrs. Grundy and the backwoodsmen' triumphed. In the evening we all attended a State ball, to which ladies, related to the members of the various orders, were of course invited to accompany their husbands, fathers or other male relatives. I got myself introduced to several of

them, belonging to the peasant order, one of whom I invited to dance with me; but she felt perhaps shy of waltzing with a complete stranger, and said she would prefer to go with me to the supper-room, where we pledged one another in black beer.

What struck me most in studying this society was the strange infatuation and unwisdom of the Russian Government in deliberately seeking to undermine so solid and Conservative an institution as this ancient representative assembly, which afforded so powerful a bulwark against the spread of Socialism and Nihilism. That Conservatives, such as M. Pobiedonostzeff, should wish to destroy it seemed as absurd as that any English Government should subvert the mediæval institutions of Jersey, of Guernsey, or of Man. Really dangerous Nihilistic, or even ordinary, revolutionary ideals appeared totally alien to Finnish sentiments. Finnish captains commanded the ships of the Russian navy: the Emperor-Grand Duke was far safer in Finland from attempts upon his life than in his own Russian dominions, and the only practical grievance of the Panslavists were the separate coinage and the customs barrier, on a frontier line close to St. Petersburg. This appeared to them to imply a control over goods imported into the Grand Duchy. For the sake of this sentimental fancy – for its practical effects were insignificant – the Russian Government deliberately attacked the ancient self-governing institutions of a loyal intensely conservative and intelligent population, which had moreover long supplied the Imperial and merchant navies in the Baltic and Black Seas with their most trustworthy and competent officers and sailors.

The Slavophil tendencies of Alexander III, and perhaps the unconscious influence of his Danish Empress,

inclined him to be, in some respects, anti-German; but he was, in his general outlook, above all intensely Russian. His father had habitually spoken French, even in his private family circle, and had used Russian chiefly in conversation with illiterate persons such as labourers or common soldiers. Almost all the official correspondence, especially in the Diplomatic Service, had been, as I have noted, carried on, since the days of Catherine the Great, in French.

Meanwhile the conflict between Russia and Bulgaria had once more assumed an acute form. The Chief, 'pseudo-Regent,' as he was termed at St. Petersburg, Stambuloff, had met at Vienna Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg, the son of a Prince of that older branch of the Saxon House, to which Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's husband, had belonged, as well as Princess Clementine of Orleans, a daughter of the French King Louis Philippe, and herself a noble and ambitious woman. Although he was a member of the Roman Catholic Church, and thus less in sympathy than the Protestant Prince Alexander of Hesse, with the national religion of his new Orthodox subjects, he was well off, reported to be able, and as he was still a bachelor might contract a marriage with some Princess, whose connections would strengthen his own throne and the country to which he owed it. The constitution of Bulgaria required an Orthodox Sovereign, but this clause was waived in the new Prince's favour, and his entry into his capital was welcomed by its inhabitants, as closing a long period of uncertainty and consequent unrest.

I myself never met Prince Ferdinand, though once, many years after his election, I saw him at a distance with King Leopold II, who was showing him the Brussels Exhibition, and the Belgian courtiers who

attended him were, I heard, a good deal impressed by his familiarity with a large and varied number of subjects.

Notwithstanding the additional work at the Embassy, which Prince Ferdinand's acceptance of the crown of Bulgaria at the hand of the 'pseudo-Regents' had occasioned, I managed to see within the following year a good deal of different parts of Russia. I travelled from Moscow to Nijni Novgorod, Kazan, Samara, Orenburg and the Kirghiz country, where I was very hospitably received by a Prince Dolgorukoff, the brother, if I am not mistaken, of the lady whose marriage to Alexander II was intended by that monarch to synchronize with the grant of a Parliamentary Constitution to his people. Here I saw the primitive habitations of the nomadic Tartar tribes, untouched by the higher culture of such places as Bokhara and Samarkand, and living largely on 'koumiss' or mares' milk. These great ancient cities I visited a year later, not without some difficulty, for at that time no foreigner could cross from Baku to the eastern shore of the Caspian without a special passport, not always easy to obtain. Although I had applied for one and had been promised that I should have it, I left Tiflis having failed to obtain it from the Governor-General, Prince Dondukoff Korsakoff, a handsome, grey-bearded and exceedingly witty personage, who merely promised to telegraph to his Government to send me the necessary papers. I therefore determined, when we reached Uzun Ada, to go on shore, but not to pass through the Customs till my ship had sailed on to Krasnovodsk, so that I could not be made to return by her to Baku. After giving my luggage to a Tartar, I told him to await me at the railway station. Then, after I had landed on the opposite beach, I walked

about for some time till the vessel which had conveyed me got up steam. Before long she moved out of the harbour, leaving me on the shores of Central Asia, and I entered the ticket office and demanded a ticket to Askabad. I was asked for my passport and 'special permit' to enter Central Asia. I had the one, but not the other, and I therefore telegraphed to the Governor of Askabad that I was leaving Uzun Ada in the hope of presenting my respects to him, and would be grateful if, as I was a member of the British Embassy at St. Petersburg, he would arrange for my being assisted to join some English friends of my own at Samarkand. When I reached Askabad, he received me very kindly and I met with no difficulty (except a slight one at Merv) during the rest of my journey to Bokhara, in which interesting city, after crossing the huge bridge over the Oxus at Charjui, I stayed by the kindness of a charming host M. Klein, the Russian Political Agent attached to the Ameer of Bokhara, at his house.

Bokhara, with its narrow winding lanes, the brilliant coloured robes of its inhabitants contrasting with their white turbans, its curious markets, where the doctors could be seen extracting tapeworms, by winding them, as they drew them out, round a tiny piece of stick, so as not to break and thus fester beneath the victims' skin, and the strange 'batchas,' or singing and dancing boys, dressed up to look like girls, was certainly one of the most Oriental cities I had ever set eyes on. The Russians had wisely built their new city for Europeans, with its drinking shops and stores, round the railway station, eight or nine miles away from the ancient Uzbeg capital.

At Charjui I had paid some local visits to the native authorities, accompanied by a Russian dragoman, and had partaken of a 'dasturkhane' of sherbet, coffee and

sugar-plums. The Governor, an amiable young man, related, so I gathered, to the Royal family of Bokhara, was cautious and laconic, and replied to the questions which my interpreter put as to the health of his numerous august relatives with the invariable formula, 'Praise be to Allah, he is well.' At the capital, I did not ask to see the Ameer, as my Russian hosts might have taken offence at such a visit. I heard afterwards that he had received a fellow-countryman, Mr. Rosenbach Walker, himself a relation in the female line to the well-known Russian General Rosenbach, who had played an important part in the conquest and affairs of Central Asia.

Bokhara struck me as peaceable and well administered. It had indeed recently been startled by the murder of the Divanbegi or native Minister of Finance. The murderer, himself of Afghan origin, was handed over, with the apparent approval of the Russian authorities, by the Kushbegi or Chief Minister of the Ameer, who entrusted his preliminary torture to the wives and concubines of his victims, and these inflicted on him every kind of indignity and mutilation which feminine cruelty could suggest, before he was forcibly dragged through the bazaar, partly torn and partly hacked to pieces. The old punishment, which consisted in hurling a criminal from the summit of a lofty tower, had apparently been considered either too commonplace or too humane. The Russians were probably well pleased that the murderer of one of their trusted native agents should suffer an exemplary death not at their own hands, but at those of native Uzbeg and Tartar 'avengers of blood.'

At Samarkand I met Curzon, then busy collecting materials for a book afterwards published by him on Central Asia, as well as Colonel Talbot, a British officer,

afterwards a British military attaché and eventually a Governor of New Zealand. He had joined the English travelling party which included Curzon and Walker, and was anxious to return home through Russia, by way of Meshed and Tehran; and although I could not go with him all this way, I was curious to see the real condition of the military road connecting Askbad and Meshed, the construction of which had for some time attracted the attention of our military observers at both the Russian and Persian capitals. I accordingly suggested his sending a telegram to the Indian Political Agent at Meshed, Maclean, saying that he proposed coming there by that way, and would like to be met with horses at Askabad, or at the nearest point to it across the Persian frontier. We heard no more for a few days and left Samarkand without an answer. After this we quitted the train and spent two pleasant days at Merv, riding over the old haunts of the savage Tekke Turcomans, with the kind and hospitable officers of the new, growing, and well-laid-out little Russian town. But our Meshed scheme failed: for our hosts explained that their authorities would not permit us to enter Persia. The portion of Khorassan lying between the Russian frontier and Meshed was, they said, in a very disturbed state: the authority of the Shah was not obeyed by the tribes to the south of the frontier, and Europeans could not travel there with safety. It was in vain that I argued that Russia was not responsible for us, once we left her territory: for as soon as we quitted Russian soil we could not, if robbed or murdered, claim from her any kind of redress.

On the second night after our arrival at Merv Colonel Talbot and I slept at the inn at Askabad, and next morning at daylight we rode up to the frontier, a

distance of some twenty to twenty-five miles. The road which climbed the hills overlooking the plains in which Askabad lies all of a sudden stopped abruptly on the summit of a fairly steep incline, overlooking an undulating, mainly arid, expanse to the south, and we realized from a stray native or so whom we met that we were on Persian soil: for no Customs officer, no guard, and no boundary pillar, indicated the junction of the two realms. Ahead of us stretched extensive and apparently desolate plains; but the Russian road by which we re-descended was a good one, though here and there needing repairs. A few hours later we were back at Askabad and left by the night train for Uzun Ada. My one regret was the loss of a lovely Persian greyhound, which had been presented to me by a friendly Russian officer at Merv and which I was anxious to present to Lady Morier. Just before we started for our ride to the frontier it made its escape from the inn in which we lodged, and was seen speeding, with a rapidity which no human competitor could equal, across the barren waste, but as far as I know it was never seen again, though speaking personally I have always thought and hoped that it found its way to its former home at Merv.

I sent a full report of this Central Asian journey to the Foreign Office, and received a handsome gratuity in cash for the information which I had been able to collect, and which, now that I had become fluent in Russian, aroused in me a desire for further journeys of exploration. Accordingly, early in the spring, I obtained permission to revisit the Caucasus, and this time drove across the Dariel pass to Vladikavkas and Tiflis. In the course of this tour I spent some little time in the picturesque monastery of Etchmiazin, the headquarters of the literary activities of all that

then constituted the most cultivated element in the Armenian race. It was the residence of the senior Primate, or Catholicos, of the Armenian Church, the prelate next in dignity to him residing at Sis, in southern Anatolia, and was thus the chief centre of Armenian religious and nationalist aspirations. It was from Etchmiazin that Professor Bryce, the distinguished author of *The Holy Roman Empire*, ascended to the summit of Mount Ararat, which the monks declared to be an impossible feat, since he would, he was assured, had he really succeeded in effecting the ascent, have been driven back by an angel, known to keep watch over the remains of Noah's ark. The monks were most hospitable: I stayed in their monastery, and I attended their Sunday service, which struck me as somewhat more Western than that of the Orthodox Church, and in their library I came across an old Oxford friend, Mr. Conybeare of University College, then engaged in the study of some of its curious old manuscripts. Etchmiazin seemed to be the centre of Armenian culture and national aspirations, which were not, however, so at least it appeared to me, fully shared by the peasant population, as distinct from the so-called 'intelligentsia.' The Russian Government was at that time desirous of introducing military service among its Armenian subjects. The Armenians had supplied it with several very capable Generals – Loris Melikoff was one of them – and I urged those of his countrymen, who deprecated military obligations, to avoid the counsels of sluggishness and acquire those military qualities which would afford the best security to a capable and talented race against the many forms of oppression that can only be resisted by force of arms. The more thoughtful and educated Armenians were, I think, in its favour; but the country farmers

and traders in the villages which I traversed appeared to regard it as merely a fresh grievance. In this respect they preferred the easier, if more degrading, Turkish system under which only Moslems were called upon to fight.

From Etchmiazin I rode on to Alexandropol and Kars. I asked to be allowed to visit its great historic fortress, observing to the Russian General in command that I was not soldier enough to be able to assimilate any dangerous information or military secrets, but he was no less firm than polite, and merely said that it was impossible, without a special permit from St. Petersburg. At Kars I joined a caravan of Turkish merchants on their way to Erzerum, a ride which took up the best part of two days. My Turkish fellow-travellers were indolent, as Turks almost always are when not engaged in suppressing subject races, and they moved in a very leisurely fashion. Every roadside fountain or collection of shady trees, though the weather was far from warm, was an excuse for a pause, in order to pray, to drink coffee, or to smoke, these varied operations being frequently followed by a nap. I tried to persuade them to push on, and I had a supporter in the Armenian cavass of the Turkish Consulate at Kars, for he knew as well as I did that we must cross the Russo-Turkish frontier before sunset, if we meant to get to Erzerum next day. We reached the last Russian outpost as the sun was sinking, and it was already dark when, after fording the small boundary stream which at this point divided the two empires, the Turks began to gallop as hard as they could go, in the darkness, over a plain strewn with rough stones and boulders. 'Be careful,' I shouted, 'where you canter: we are off the track and galloping over gullies and rocky ground.' 'Don't shout,' ex-

claimed one of my Turkish friends, 'we are no longer safe, as in Russia. This land is full of Kurdish brigands, and the worst of them all is Kerim: if he catches us, as is quite on the cards, he will skin us alive. You had better take the chances of a tumble than of that.' At last, in pitch darkness, though still in our saddles, we got to Zivin, the first Turkish village. The good-natured Customs inspector, after turning all his countrymen's goods inside out and extorting what I know not in duty, for my diplomatic passport protected me, made up comfortable beds for us all upon the office floor, where we slept, free from fears of Kerim. Next day, after passing the rock of Hassan Kaleh, we separated at about noon in the crowded bazaar of Erzerum, where I stayed at the comfortable house of my old friend Mr. Wratislaw, the British acting-Consul in that city.

The last stage of my journey to the coast of Anatolia was pleasant and in many ways amusing. Erzerum itself, and the high plateau on which it lies, were cold and bleak. My first call there was on the Turkish Governor, or Wali, who was very anti-Armenian, and compared the Armenians of Turkey to the Nihilists of Russia, as a justification for the rigorous treatment which, in his opinion, they deserved. He was, however, very civil to me, and procured for me a Zaptieh (or Turkish policeman) to ride with me to Trebizond. He was a young fellow of about my own age, obliging, for he proved a helpful valet, and amusing, for he was full of anecdotes and jokes. We became great friends, and I felt quite sorry when, as we approached the frontier between the vilayets of Erzerum and Trebizond, he informed me that, in accordance with the orders of his chief, the Alai Bey, he must, to his great regret, leave me. If, however, I could see my way to

offer him another Turkish pound or so, he would gladly ride on with me as far as the coast. I must, however, in this event, write a letter to the Alai Bey explaining that I had threatened to flog him unless he consented to go on to Trebizond. I agreed, and when we reached the provincial boundary, I waved my whip at him in a threatening manner, whereupon he roared with laughter, and we rode on merrily together, over whitening hills, strewn with the carcasses of a large caravan of camels which had lost their way and been overwhelmed some weeks earlier by a very heavy avalanche of snow. Before long we reached, on the other side of the range, the summit of the historic hill from which the remains of Xenophon's ten thousand Greeks, on their return from the field of Cunaxa, had, for the first time after many weary months, hailed with shouts of joy the sight of the blue Euxine. When we parted on the following day I gave my policeman his extra pound, and a paper recording my threat to flog him. I asked whether the Alai Bey would not resent his disobedience to orders, at the bidding of a helpless, unarmed traveller. 'Not at all,' he said, 'for I shall give him one-half of your kind gratuity, and all the three parties to the transaction will, please God, be thus equally content.'

I spent a few days at Trebizond, where the foreign Consuls, and especially the French one, M. Croisier, the author of a valuable work on Moslem law, showed me much hospitality and kindness. The day following my arrival was Easter Sunday, and after purifying myself in a Turkish bath from the travel stains of my long ride, I went to the service at the Greek Church, and heard for the first time the modern Greek or Romaic language chanted in the latest fashion. A few days later, after a brief stoppage at Samsoun, I beheld for the

first time the entrance into the Bosphorus from the north, and the splendid panorama of Constantinople which, although I did not at the time know it, was for some years to be my own official home. On my transfer to Constantinople, a year later, my place at St. Petersburg as Sir Robert Morier's private secretary was filled by my friend Mr. (now Sir Charles) Eliot, His Majesty's Ambassador in Japan.

Eliot was not merely a brilliant scholar of Balliol and a fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, but in addition to his classical attainments, a marvellous modern linguist. He knew indeed almost every language. He had, when at St. Petersburg, not only learnt the difficult Finnish, but had composed a Finnish grammar. When the proof sheets of this work suddenly disappeared from a villa which Sir Robert Morier had taken at Oranienbaun on the shores of the Baltic, it transpired, or at least was asserted, that the Russian secret police, which sometimes collected all loose papers lying about in the Chanceries or other offices of the Foreign Embassies, had mistaken his paradigms of declensions and lists of irregular Finnish verbs for the keys of a British Government cipher. Some years later, when I was moved to Egypt, he succeeded me at Constantinople, where he wrote, under the pseudonym of 'Odysseus,' one of the best and most illuminating books that I know on the Ottoman Empire, its various subject races, and its many domestic and international problems.

In the summer of 1888, shortly after my return from this visit to Transcaucasia and Anatolia, the Russian Government decided to celebrate the thousandth anniversary of the conversion of Russia to Christianity, at Kieff, where the canonized Tzar Vladimir was baptized in the waters of the Dnieper. All the countries in communion or close relationship with the

Orthodox Church of Russia were invited to participate in the celebration of this great event in the annals of the Empire. It was suggested to me by one of the English clergy at St. Petersburg that, although the English and Russian Churches were not in formal communion with one another, a good effect on their increasingly friendly relations might perhaps be produced if an English ecclesiastical dignitary were to attend, as a mark of sympathy, the historic religious gathering at Kieff. I wrote to this effect to an old Oxford friend, Mr. Riley, who had long taken an interest in the Oriental Churches, more especially the Nestorians of Persia: he, I think, saw the then English Primate, Archbishop Benson, and arranged that the latter should delegate my old schoolfellow and companion in Scandinavian and Icelandic travels, Mr. William Birkbeck, a Norfolk country squire, as His Grace's personal delegate, and should moreover entrust him in that capacity in a letter of congratulations, and with other verbal expressions of sympathy on the part of the Anglican Church to the Russian Metropolitan of Kieff. This gave me an opportunity of accompanying him to that historic city, which I had for a long time wished to visit, and of meeting there a number of delegates from the Slav States of the Balkan Peninsula, all of whom, and especially Zankoff, from Bulgaria, represented the Panslavic movement in their respective countries, rather than the inclination of the so-called pseudo-Regents at Sofia to look for help to Austria and England.

Amongst these foreign delegates was a curious personage, a Russian Cossack officer named Aschinoff, who had spent several years of exploration in Abyssinia, and had now come to the festival at Kieff as a representative of that country's ancient Church, which,

adhering as it still does, *pro formâ*, to the Monophysite heresy, could scarcely be regarded as an Orthodox sister of that of Russia.

The Russian Government was, however, on the look out for supporters of its general Eastern policy in all directions, and, in Africa, the Powers of whose success it was most jealous were Great Britain, its French ally's rival in Egypt, and Italy, attached to that Triple Alliance in which Germany was the leading spirit and which Lord Salisbury had hailed on its formation as 'good tidings of great joy.' Aschinoff was accordingly welcomed and made much of by the ruling authorities in Russia.

The fêtes at Kieff, to which I went for the purpose of presenting my friend Birkbeck as the Archbishop's deputy to Pobiedonostzeff and other distinguished persons in the Slavophil world, such as General Count Ignatieff and his charming and talented wife, who had for some time represented their country at its Embassy on the Bosphorus, were, apart from their setting, extremely picturesque. The old sacred city on the Dnieper, with its wonderful ancient historic buildings and the numerous monasteries, all teeming with strange pilgrims and ascetics. The programme of the festival included 'Te Deums' and other solemn religious ceremonies, military displays, and splendid banquets to the delegates, followed by patriotic dramas or plays illustrating scenes in the Russian annals, and exceedingly well performed. But a touch of sadness was imparted by the sudden death, in the midst of these rejoicings, of General Durnovo, who was in command of the local garrison.

Birkbeck's own interest in it was that of a traveller, mainly attracted by Russian history, by archæology, and music, rather than by modern Russian politics.

He laid the foundation of a personal friendship with Pobiedinostzeff, and continued to maintain it until his own premature death. He had been from his youth a strong sympathiser with the English High Church movement, and he shared its desire, as old as the days of the Nonjurors, for the cultivation of closer relations between the ancient Churches of the East and that of his own native land. In pursuit of this object, he afterwards travelled in Russia, with Archbishop Maclagan of York and with Bishop Creighton of Peterborough and afterwards of London, who represented the Church of England at the Imperial Coronation, in the historic Cathedral of the Assumption at Moscow, of the Emperor Nicholas II. This compliment was returned by the Russians, when they sent the Russian Bishop Antonius of Finland to that of King Edward VII. He thus formed a close intimacy with many prominent members of Russian society, who desired a more friendly understanding between both the Churches and Empires. His own constant zeal in the prosecution of this object was indeed the indirect cause of his own sudden and premature death, at the time of the Great War, in which Russia and England were allied against Germany; for a few days after his return to his Norfolk home he succumbed to the effects of a severe cold, contracted during a visit of a semi-political character to some of his many Russian friends. These were numerous, and included not merely Russian statesmen and prelates, but the Emperor Nicholas II himself, who honoured him, under the name of Ivan Ivanitch, with an intimate personal friendship. Such were some of the consequences of the rather thoughtless curiosity which had impelled so insignificant a person as myself, many years before these events, to visit the historic town of Kieff.

One of the chief weaknesses of the Russian administration in those years, which I think impressed me most, was the widespread corruption pervading the entire bureaucracy, and the indifference with which it was regarded by the public. I remember being a good deal amused at a story which delighted all St. Petersburg on the appointment of a new Minister of Finance, who had, on his installation in office, to take the oath of allegiance to the Emperor by kissing a sacred 'icon' or picture of the Holy Virgin, at the Kazan Cathedral in that city. After the ceremony, it was rumoured that a priceless jewel in Our Lady's crown had suddenly disappeared, and all society laughed with delight at the explanation that the gem, as the Minister's lips touched it, had been supernaturally, or at least very skilfully, extracted by his teeth.

I myself often talked with Russian friends about the corruption ascribed to the Tchinovniks in the various departments, and asked if it was not somewhat perilous, inasmuch as a would-be corrupter might occasionally find that he had by chance struck an honest man. I was assured that this danger was exceedingly slight. A good deal, too, depended upon tact. If, when a man laid a request before an official, and the latter at once discussed it, it was rather a bad sign; but if he appeared to reflect, and above all if he suggested his visitor's calling on him later on 'at his private house,' the applicant would act wisely in bringing, when he did so, his cheque-book. The existence of a corrupt third party in the Department, whose support, unfortunately, could only be obtained by a large bribe, was respectfully assumed, and the visitor had only to beg him to fix the lowest figure which this deplorably venal person would accept. I remember being amused by the experiences of a landed proprietor

in the Caucasus who was anxious to sell an estate at a good price to the Minister of Imperial Domains. After seeing the 'negotiator' concerned, and doubtless signing the customary cheque, he left the room and was waiting for his carriage, when a young clerk ran down the stairs carrying under one of his arms a large picture. 'I am,' he explained, 'the confidential secretary of the official in charge of your affair. I am also a great lover of the Caucasus, its scenery and its people. It has occurred to me that you might like to buy this picture, painted by me, of a lovely mountain landscape in the immediate vicinity of your family estate. Its contemplation might, I fancied, recall to you happy days you had spent in the midst of that glorious scenery. It is moreover really dirt cheap, a matter of, say, 500 roubles.' 'How kind and thoughtful of you!' replied my friend, as he paid out the notes demanded. 'It will indeed be a memento which I and my children after me will cherish. But would you mind calling for my carriage?' The little clerk, instead of doing so, ran upstairs and a few minutes later reappeared, followed by several servants, each bearing, as well as himself, other pictures of Caucasian landscapes of various sizes and prices. 'Quick,' shouted the terrified seller to his coachman, 'drive as fast as ever you can, or this fellow will compel me to buy a whole gallery of his daubs, at usurious prices; and I can't afford to offend him.'

Another anecdote which amused me almost equally was related to me by an English contractor who had undertaken to transport by sea, during the Russian war with Japan, a considerable force of Russian soldiers. Unused to local methods, he had hoped to obtain, by submitting a low estimate, the contract, but on being summoned to the Admiralty at St. Petersburg he was informed by a board of high

officials that 'his figures were somewhat disappointing.' 'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I can give my word of honour that I have made them as low as possible. I can't do the job for less.' 'That is just the fault we find with you,' he was answered, 'you have made no allowance for the large commissions which will have to be paid to a high personage in the Government, whom I must not mention by name, as well as to a charming but rather grasping lady, whom I would rather not specify, but in whom that personage has been pleased to take an interest.' 'If that is all your Excellencies want,' said my friend, 'I shall be very happy to meet you. I can double the estimate, if you wish it.' 'Why not treble it, while we are about it?' was the answer. 'It is not for me,' said the English contractor, 'to object to your generous offer,' and the bargain was rapidly concluded, to the complete satisfaction of all concerned.

CHAPTER IV

ROUMANIA

After spending two years as second secretary at Constantinople – a subject with which I hope to deal in a later volume of reminiscences – I received, in January, 1890, instructions from the Foreign Office to proceed to Bucharest, in order to act there as Chargé d'Affaires during the absence on leave of the British Minister, Sir Frank Cavendish Lascelles. Landing at Varna, I traversed north-eastern Bulgaria by train, and crossed the Danube in an open boat, amidst masses of floating ice, just breaking up, to the Roumanian frontier town of Giurgevo. With me crossed an unfortunate French journalist, a naturalized citizen of the Central American Republic of San Domingo. He had been expelled on political grounds from Bulgaria, but had failed to obtain permission to land on the opposite shore, where I left him angrily protesting against his proposed re-expulsion by the local police. 'I have done this detestable journey,' he indignantly exclaimed, 'several times, and seem likely to go on doing so for ever!' What befell him in the end I cannot say, for I left him still expostulating with the officials, and with a remorseless Charon, whose fare he was unable to pay. On arriving at Bucharest, a couple of hours later, I reported myself to our Minister. He kindly placed his comfortable Legation in the Calea de Grivitza at my disposal, during the few months I was to pass at my new post. My staff consisted of an English attaché, Mr. Hamilton Browne, a relation of my own, his father, a member of the Wells Cathedral Chapter, having married one of my Hardinge second cousins, and of an elderly Roumanian clerk.

Bucharest, though the capital of a new and secondary kingdom, was then what would be termed in the jargon of diplomacy, an interesting 'post of observation.' Roumania had been formed only a quarter of a century earlier, by the union of the two vassal Ottoman principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, and had been raised to the rank of an independent monarchy twelve years later, by the Treaty of Berlin. It would be foreign to the purposes of these reminiscences to trace its history back to the days when it was a Roman Botany Bay, to which criminals and political offenders were banished by the earlier Cæsars, whence its name Roumania or Romania, like the Greek equivalent Roumi or Roman, still borne by the Greek natives of the Eastern Roman Empire. But some reference to the events of the earlier half of the nineteenth and indeed of the eighteenth century is still necessary to a comprehension of its politics in 1890, and more especially to the conflict which underlay them, between the older Conservative party, representing old so-called Boyar or Phanariot aristocracy, and the Liberal heirs of the Democratic rising of 1848. The Phanariots, so-called from the 'Phanar' or Lighthouse which gives its name to the Greek quarter of Stambul, long the residence of the Greek Orthodox Patriarch, were the Greek Viceroys. The Porte sent them to rule for a term of years over the two vassal principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia at their capitals, Bucharest and Jassy. As the power of Russia in the early eighteenth century began to make itself increasingly felt throughout Eastern Europe, they became the instruments of Russian as well as Turkish policy on the Lower Danube, alternately playing off one against the other, so far as they dared to do so, these rival

Empires. These Hospodars,[1] like so many Turkish or Persian satraps in modern times, long bought from the Sultan of Turkey the right to administer their respective provinces, appropriating to themselves the greater part of their revenues, and were followed by a horde of Greek retainers and parasites, each eager for his own share in the pickings. Just as the Mahratta sovereigns of Central and Western India, the 'slipper bearer' Scindia of Gwalior, and the 'cowherd' Gaekwar of Baroda, were originally the menials of the Peishwa, so the heads of the great hereditary Boyar families in Wallachia and Moldavia were the descendants of the retainers who swelled the trains of these Greek Viceroys. Thus the name 'Catargi' (muleteer), borne by the Conservative leader in my day in Roumania, recalled the humbler functions in the Hospodar's stable. Another distinguished Phanariot in my time was descended from a Viceregal cook, a circumstance which led an unkind joker to observe to him, when he boasted of his illustrious ancestry, 'Mais oui, mon cher, personne n'ignore que vous êtes le digne descendent du grand croisé, le célèbre [2] "chaudfroid" de Bouillon.' The older and purer Moldavian and Wallachian families, such as the Bibescos, the Stourdzas and the Rosettis, though less wealthy than the Phanariot lords of vast estates, deemed themselves of much purer and more ancient blood. Both these classes of the Roumanian aristocracy had for many years intermarried with one another and still form a single powerful party of land-

[1] The term Hospodar, derived from Gospod, or Hospod (Lord) applied to the Almighty, and rendered in Russian Gasudar, 'Gospodar,' or Gospudin, is a Slavonic word meaning 'Master' or Lord. The Russian Emperors were all received by their subjects as Gosudar Imperator.

[2] Godefroi or Geoffroi.

owners, Conservative in its general tendencies, but containing within its ranks a certain cultivated Liberal as well as a non-Progressive element.

The supremacy of this proud and powerful Greek oligarchy of Boyar landowners, to give them their old Slavonic as distinct from their Hellenic designation, was first shaken when the Russian Empress Catherine II obtained by the Treaty of Kutchuk Kinardji (July 18, 1774) a right of intervention in the affairs of Moldavia and Wallachia, over which the Greek Prince Ipsilanti and the Orthodox Albanian Gregory Ghika had been respectively placed as Hospodars by the Porte. In 1812, this term of office was limited to a period of seven years. This arrangement, after giving rise to many diplomatic conflicts and the transfer to Russia of Bessarabia, developed into a kind of Turco-Russian 'Condominium' vested in the so-called 'Suzerain' and 'protecting courts' at Constantinople and St. Petersburg respectively, not unlike the Anglo-French and later *de facto* Anglo-Turkish right of interference in the Ottoman dependency of Egypt and the Sudan.

A second factor in the situation, which could hardly fail to appeal to the Greek Viceroys at Bucharest and Jassy, the capitals of the two vassal principalities which recognized the Sultan as their Sovereign, was the formation, in 1814, of the Hetairia or Association for the liberation achieved in 1830 of Ancient Greece from the Turkish yoke. A third element was a peasant rising throughout Moldavia and Wallachia, led by a peasant patriot, a kind of Eastern William Tell, the famous Tudor or Theodore Vladimoresco, against the rule both of the Sultan and of the Hospodar, which ended in this national hero's murder. These events fired the national consciousness in both the vassal principalities, and brought about the substitution for

the two Greek Viceroys of two native nobles, the Wallach John Sturdza and the Albanian Gregory Ghika, as well as the formation of a new so-called 'Liberal party' imbued with national, and still more dangerous Western, ideals. Both moreover were desirous of seeing the triumph of their new progressive programme from the Carpathians and the Danube to the Pruth. It was easy to applaud this programme: less easy to restrain it within bounds.

The new Hospodars endeavoured, as a first step in this direction, to recognize the existing administrations in their respective principalities; but when in 1828 the Emperor Nicholas I declared war against Turkey, and compelled her to sign the Peace of Adrianople, their original seven years' term of office was converted into a life tenure, and they were then practically placed in a situation not much less advantageous than that enjoyed by Mahomed Ali and his successors in the viceroyalty of Egypt, and of the earlier princes of Serbia and Bulgaria.

Eighteen years later, in 1846, the Hospodar of Wallachia, Gregory Ghika, was deposed by the Russo-Turkish Condominium and succeeded by a youth of pure Roumanian, as distinct from Pharnarist or Albanian, origin, in the person of Prince George Bibesco, who was generally supported by the more Conservative and Russophil Phanariot elements among the Boyars. This element was, however, already beginning to be attacked by a party imbued with Western Liberal and even Radical ideals. When in February, 1848, the deposition of King Louis Philippe let loose a revolutionary movement throughout Continental Europe, its effects were felt even in the still backward States of the Lower Danube. In Wallachia and Moldavia alike its supporters were bent on getting

rid both of Russian and of Turkish control, and on welding the two principalities into a single Roumanian State, endowed with the Liberal institutions of Western Europe.

Early in June, 1848, the leaders of the movement in Wallachia proclaimed a democratic constitution at the military camp of Islaz near Bucharest, and forced the Hospodar, George Bibesco, to abdicate. They then proceeded to create the inevitable constituents' Assembly, which they invited to establish 'Liberal institutions,' a responsible 'chief magistrate,' a purely elective Parliament, a 'national guard,' the abolition of nobiliary titles and privileges, the suppression of capital punishment, equal rights for Jews and Christians, in fact the complete, up-to-date 'democratic bill of fare.' Bibesco, who had first advocated the forcible suppression of the movement, decided three days later to abdicate. He fled across the Carpathians to Cronstadt in Transylvania, leaving behind him a Provisional Government under the presidency of the Primate Neophytus, in which two statesmen afterwards famous, Rosetti and John Bratiano, were given office.

The new Government was recognized by the British Consul-General at Bucharest, Mr. Colquhoun, but the Suzerain and Protecting Powers, Turkey and Russia, who disapproved of these flirtations with advanced Western Radicalism, were less obliging. The Porte dispatched an armed force from Bulgaria to establish order, and the Russian Chancellor Nesselrode denounced the new movement as 'democratic,' and 'unacceptable to the Suzerain and Protecting Powers.' Its leaders were arrested and banished; the constitution was suppressed, and two new Hospodars, Barbo Stirbey and Gregory Ghika, were dispatched to

assume the government, the one at Bucharest, and the other at Jassy.

Ten years later, both these States effected a personal union, which was soon to become a real union, by simultaneously electing as Hospodar in both the Roumanian principalities Prince Alexander John Couza, and obtaining his recognition and sanction by the Great European Powers. Though by no means devoid of ability, the first Sovereign of United Roumania was alternately Radical and Autocratic. He tried to do too much and to move too fast at once. He alienated the Jews by a tax on the long curly locks which they cultivated as a sign of their ancient race, and thus made bitter enemies of them. His vigour and summary methods gave offence in many influential quarters, and in 1866 he was suddenly deposed. A band of conspirators broke into his palace, and entering the bedroom in which he was sleeping with his mistress, a lady of the noble family of the Catargis, called upon him to sign his own immediate abdication of his office as Hospodar of the two Danubian principalities. Enraged but helpless, he is said to have replied – such at least was the story as I heard it in Roumania – that he had in his bedroom no pen or ink with which to sign a document, and no table on which it could be laid for his signature. He was answered that the necessary pen and ink had been brought, and that the shapely back of the lady reclining by his side would supply a charming writing-desk for the formalities of His Highness's abdication. In this quaint but scarcely chivalrous political formality she was forced to acquiesce, lying with her face buried in her pillow, while her lover, standing over her, signed the document which terminated this brief and somewhat turbulent reign of the last native Sovereign of Roumania.

The Roumanians of both principalities now determined to elect a foreign ruler. The choice of the Count of Flanders, a younger brother of the neutral Sovereign of Belgium, which had at first been contemplated, was opposed, on account of his Orleans connections, by Napoleon III. However the Emperor did not veto, indeed he rather approved, the selection of Prince Charles of Hohenzollern-Sigmaringen, whose brother's election to the throne of Spain was, a few years later, to bring about the Franco-German War. Prince Charles was himself a Catholic, but of the Liberal German type, and was perfectly willing that his children should be brought up in the Orthodox Church. Bismarck strongly recommended his acceptance of the proposed sovereignty, suggesting that he should resign his German military rank before crossing the frontier, so as not to lay himself open to the charge of desertion, and he is said to have travelled down the Danube as Mr. Lehmann (a merchant), and on one occasion to have personated a ship's cook. He landed at Turnu Severin in May, 1872, and accepted the new constitution which a Parliament, specially convoked, had already drawn up. I need not describe its details: they reproduced in some respects the main features adopted in Belgium, a Senate elected, except for the presence in it of the heir-apparent, of eight bishops and two University representatives; and a House of Deputies elected by all tax payers, but divided into three electoral Colleges, in accordance with varying qualifications. Laws thus voted, by both the Congress of Deputies and by the Senate, were liable to suspension for revision, but were declared to be susceptible of suspension, as distinct from absolute rejection, by the Crown.

If I have dilated at some length on the past history

of Roumania, it is because a general knowledge of it is essential to an understanding of her modern position. One of the natural effects of her revolution of 1848 was the formation of the two great modern parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, who, when I was there, regularly succeeded one another. The Conservative landowners' party, headed, in my time, by the great Phanariot Boyar, Lascar Catargi, represented the forces not – to be quite fair – of pure reaction, but of steady resistance to the advanced, albeit not extreme, Liberal movement, which since 1848 had found its ablest exponent in John Bratiano. This type of Liberalism was, when I was at Bucharest, moderate and cautious in regard to domestic matters; but in the domain of foreign politics, it sought to circumscribe, within safe limits, the ascendancy which the Tzars had long striven to acquire over the Orthodox States of Eastern Europe, with a view to the ends pursued for 250 years by Peter the Great and his successors. Roumania's resistance to these Russian aims had been favoured in part by the fact that Panslavism or the union, under Russian influence, if not actual guidance, of all the nations combining Slavonic blood with Orthodox Christianity, meant but little to a race proud of its own ancient Latin civilization and descent. It appealed firstly to aristocratical traditions and sympathies, instinctively hostile to the levelling tendencies, in some respects, of Russian autocracy and red tape: but also to the fact that the two Latin principalities constituted, in all other respects, an outpost of Western Europe in the Nearer East. This is, I think, one of the circumstances which imparted a somewhat distinctive interest to the earlier history and modern developments of Roumanian institutions.

When I began my work at Bucharest, the internal political situation had been for some two years disturbed. The Liberal Ministry, of which John Bratiano was the head, had successfully steered the young kingdom through the difficulties created by the Russo-Turkish War, and was generally favourable to the Triple Alliance, to which our own Government inclined. The Conservative leaders of the old Boyar and Phanariot aristocracies had, oddly enough, been supported by a Radical element led by the Mayor of Bucharest, and more consistently with his constant efforts to encourage internal complications, by the active Russian Envoy, M. Hitrovo. Bratiano had dissolved Parliament in 1889, but his Ministry had not obtained a sufficient majority to govern without extraneous help. Serious riots had taken place at Bucharest, shots being fired in the vicinity of the Parliament buildings, and a Coalition Government had been formed under M. Rosetti, a moderate Conservative, with the support of M. Carp, a former Minister accredited to Vienna, who was destined to play an important part in his country's later annals.

M. Carp, whom I knew and admired, was a very remarkable man, perhaps one of the ablest in his country. His strong pro-German sympathies and his distrust of France as Russia's friend – our own country he regarded with comparative indifference – inclined him to lean towards the Triple Alliance, with which my own chief, Lord Salisbury, was in general sympathy. These views were shared by a rising politician, M. Take Jonescu, who was married to an English lady, and was thus always a welcome guest at our Legation. In regard to domestic questions, the Junimist or young Conservative supporters of Carp bore a certain resemblance to the Fourth Party which, in England, still

followed Lord Randolph Churchill, and to the 'Jeune Droits,' or progressive younger Clericals, such as M. Carton de Wiart, in Belgium. Carp himself had founded, with the aid of two Conservative sympathisers, Rosetti and Majoresco, a society of promising students of politics and literature at Jassy, under the name of the 'Junimea,' or 'youth,' its aims including, amongst other items on its programme, the improvement of the condition of the peasantry, decentralization, irremovable magistrates, a gold standard, and good relations with Austria, where he himself had represented his country. This last item in his programme attracted his supporters to the Triple Alliance, and accentuated the suspicion and dislike with which he and his friends regarded the unscrupulous intrigues carried on by the Russian Envoy, M. Hitrovo.

That able and unscrupulous diplomatist, whose acquaintance I made soon after my arrival at Bucharest, was a tall, rather handsome man, with an ample dark beard. He represented the type of Russian politician who has been taught to carry reserve, in regard to all questions of foreign and diplomatic affairs, to a somewhat exaggerated degree, avoiding, as dangerous, any frank exchange of views on public questions with his colleagues. He was regarded with a good deal of distrust by the Roumanian Court, for he had persuaded the Opposition in the Chambers to resist the fortification sanctioned in 1889, on the Galatz-Fokshani line, as well as of Bucharest itself, for which a sum of fifteen million francs (£600,000) had been already voted by them. He was said to have demanded the right of passage for Russian troops across the newly acquired Dobrudja in the event of a fresh Eastern war, to have opposed the proclamation of the King's

nephew, the Crown Prince Ferdinand, as heir-apparent, calculated as it was to strengthen the stability of the new German dynasty, and to have worked against a Bill for the expulsion of Russian Panslavists, who distributed among the peasants pictures of the Orthodox Russian Tzar, and excited them against their own rulers. He was, moreover, alleged to be constantly intriguing behind the scenes, with the Russophile party and its agents at Sofia, and to have directed from his Legation a series of unsuccessful plots against the person and authority of its new ruler, Prince Ferdinand of Coburg, one of which ignominiously failed when I was myself in Roumania.

In the year which preceded my arrival at Bucharest, Bratiano's Liberal Government had found itself in a minority, and had been compelled to resign. Disorders broke out in the capital, shots were fired at or near the Parliament, and a Coalition Ministry, already disorganized, had been formed by Rosetti and Carp. An agitation followed, aiming at the restoration of the deposed Hospodar, Alexander Couza, and after a fresh but inconclusive appeal to the country, which served however to reduce the parliamentary strength of Bratiano's Liberal supporters, three Conservatives, M. Lahovary, General Mano, and M. Vanesco, became members of the new Coalition Government. A motion for the impeachment of Bratiano was rejected by only one vote, but shortly afterwards Carp carried a Bill authorizing the distribution of certain State lands to the peasantry. Soon afterwards (in April, 1889) an exclusively Conservative Government was once more formed under the old Boyar leader, Lascar Catargi, a venerable and dignified figure, with his massive frame and capacious bald forehead, fringed by snowy locks. But although supported by the Russian Legation,

which distrusted Bratiano's Austro-German leanings, Catargi proved unable to keep his supporters together. His place was taken by General Mano, a respectable Boyar Conservative, and though he failed in an attempt to impeach Bratiano and some of that statesman's Liberal colleagues for malversation, it had already maintained itself for more than a year in power when I entered on my temporary duties at Bucharest. Its Foreign Minister, M. Lahovary, another wealthy Boyar and a courteous and amiable statesman, transacted all our diplomatic business, which was never very serious, with me. Beyond its own desire to see peace maintained in the Balkan Peninsula, and to afford a general support to the *status quo* and the Triple Alliance, our Government had no pronounced policy in so far as Roumania herself was concerned.

Besides M. Hitrovo, whose activities I have already attempted to describe, the diplomatic body at Bucharest included several striking personalities. Austria was represented by Count Goluchowsky, a Galician Polish magnate, married to a French lady, Princess Murat, a hostess of much charm. He detested his Russian colleague, not merely as a political antagonist, but with all the instinctive antipathy which a Muscovite inspires in a Pole. I once asked him if he was going to an evening party at the Russian Legation, and received the curt reply, 'Non, je ne fréquente pas les mauvais lieux.' His relations with Roumanian politicians, as distinct from the Roumanian Court, whose sympathies were Austro-German, were rather lacking in cordiality, for Hungarian Transylvania was coveted by many Roumanian nationalists as a part of 'Roumania Irredenta,' still groaning under the Magyar yoke. I once travelled with him to Kronstadt, a picturesque,

mainly German, city, and visited some of the purely German villages inhabited by a so-called 'Saxon' Lutheran population, which disliked the Calvinistic Magyar Protestants, and treated with a haughty contempt the Roumanian-speaking Orthodox Vlachs or Wallachs (the name is identical with that given by our English ancestors to the 'Welsh' rural labouring class). Transylvania, indeed, ever since the days of its famous Prince or 'Voievode' Bethlen Gabor in the seventeenth century, had been a mainly Protestant country, and both Austrian and Hungarian Catholic missionaries were very busy throughout all these 'debatable lands' in endeavouring to create so-called Uniat Churches, which combined the Greek Orthodox ritual and a married secular priesthood with obedience to the authority of the Pope. This latter was not popular, and seems to have been kept in the background, for when one of my servants, a Roumanian Uniat, asked me to act as godfather to his infant son, and I suggested that as he was himself a Catholic, we should baptize the child in the Catholic Chapel at Sinaia, he was shocked at the idea of aspersion, at the hands of a bald and beardless divine, and insisted on the complete immersion of the infant by a long-haired Orthodox 'pappas.' These borderlands between the West and East were, in fact, a somewhat curious mosaic of conflicting religious denominations, which often tended to puzzle their own votaries.

The German Minister was Count (afterwards Prince) Bülow, who became eventually German Chancellor. He was married to a very pretty and cultivated lady, a daughter of the celebrated Italian politician Minghetti. I had known him fairly well at St. Petersburg, and saw a good deal of him in Roumania. He was a

man of brilliant ability, and I think I learnt more from him during my Chargé d'Affaireship than from any other head of a foreign mission. His communicativeness, his store of anecdotes and reminiscences, and the charm of his manners were delightful. He exercised a considerable influence over M. Carp, who was probably the ablest of Roumanian politicians, and who remained till the close of the Great War a devoted adherent of Austro-German as opposed to Franco-Russian policy. Later on, during his Chancellorship, he was called upon by his Imperial master to play a part in his country's foreign policy far from friendly to the interests of England.

France was represented by M. de Coutouly, a lively and agreeable man, who had begun life as a journalist and had written for the Press in many lands. He revived my old interest in Spain by numerous anecdotes of the Carlist campaign of 1872, which he had followed as a special correspondent. One of these, which he told very graphically, was that of a poor Carlist prisoner, whom the Government troops had captured, stripped and tied to a tree, preparatory to hacking him limb from limb. Coutouly indignantly interfered, insisted on this butchery being stopped, until sanctioned by an officer; and he had the satisfaction soon afterwards of seeing his protégé unbound, and enjoying a good meal with the very men who had proposed cutting him to pieces, and were now pressing on him wine and cigarettes. As French Minister, he was obliged to go hand-in-hand with M. Hitrovo, but I think that at heart he disapproved of his Russian colleagues' methods as detrimental to good relations between Russia and most of the leaders in Roumanian politics, not to speak of the King and his Court. His own opinion, as far as I could judge from my own

imperfect knowledge of the country, always seemed to me moderate and sensible.

The Italian Minister, Signor Curtopassi, was also uniformly kind and pleasant. A story used to be told of him, which was probably a romance, though it may have developed from a partially accurate incident. The Queen of Roumania, the talented Carmen Sylva, had composed a poem on Tudor Vladimiresco, the Roumanian peasant hero and patriot, who had, early in the nineteenth century, waged a partially successful war against the Turks, and was reciting it to a circle of guests, one of whom was Curtopassi. Tired by a long day's shooting, he had dropped asleep, and was suddenly awakened by hearing the Queen, who was apostrophizing her hero, exclaim, 'Tudor, Tudor!' The sound woke him up, and imagining, in his semi-conscious condition, that the words were addressed to himself, he exclaimed with some warmth, amidst the scarcely suppressed laughter of the audience, 'Mais non, Madame, je ne dors pas: loin de cela, j'écoute avec le plus vif intérêt le superbe poème de votre Majesté.' As representing a Sovereign attached to the Triple Alliance, he acted in complete harmony with Count Goluchowski and Prince Bülow and their Turkish colleague Feridun Bey, in what was then one of the minor Eastern questions of the day, that of the issue of 'Berats' or letters-patent to the Bishops of the schismatic Bulgarian Church in Macedonia. The Dutch and Belgian Ministers, M. de Weede, and M. Hooricks, both of them friendly and pleasant colleagues, reflected the neutral policy of their peace-loving and disinterested Courts.

In the early summer of 1890, the diplomatic body removed from Bucharest to Sinaia in the Carpathians, where the Royal family resided in a picturesque

modern palace surrounded by lofty wooded hills. The foreign representatives, whether Ministers or Chargés d'Affaires, were frequently invited to luncheon with the Royal family, and honoured by long conversations on the questions of the day with King Charles. These were always remarkably interesting, for he was both a capable soldier and a sagacious politician, and expressed himself with considerable frankness on all the burning questions of the day. A stranger to the country which had called him to the throne, a capable soldier, indifferent to the pleasures and amusements of a somewhat frivolous society, and a serious statesman immersed against his will in the cabals of political intrigues, his situation and character seemed to me to bear a certain resemblance to those of our own William III, when that Prince was invited to rule a society long accustomed to smile rather than frown upon the loose morals and cynicism of Charles II. Had he shaved his beard, his aquiline features would have rendered this resemblance even more complete.

One of the burning questions of the day was a romantic love affair between the Crown Prince Ferdinand and a maid of honour, Mademoiselle Vacaresco. She belonged to an old Roumanian family of pure Wallachian as distinct from Phanariot origin, and one of her uncles was a popular journalist, who supplied the society gossip in the columns of the *Indépendance Roumaine*. King Charles did not share his consort's sympathy with this flirtation: for his inclinations, like those of his Ministers, favoured a marriage between the heir apparent and a Princess of a reigning European house, such as that which was eventually arranged between the Prince and a daughter of the Duke of Edinburgh. The subject was never mentioned in the

King's conversations with the foreign representatives; but he always spoke to them with considerable frankness on his country's political necessities. As a German Prince, his sympathies were Austro-German, and he shared the resentment of his people at the article in the Treaty of Berlin which had forced him to exchange, for the desolate region of the Dobrudja lying on the southern bank of the Danube, the portion of Bessarabia united to Moldavia at the close of the Crimean War. In his occasional conversations with me, he explained his own views on Eastern politics, which were eminently practical, and his far-seeing sagacity and clearness of vision made a powerful impression on my mind. To his own people he was an object of respect rather than of affection: for the fashionable world of Bucharest was not zealous for the sanctity of the matrimonial tie, and divorces were as common as they were easy, the Orthodox Roumanian Church holding, like many Protestants, that the marriage tie was not indissoluble, and that remarriage, after its dissolution, need involve no unpleasant relations between couples who preferred to recover their pre-matrimonial freedom. I have myself been presented by a divorced husband to his former wife, just as naturally as I might have been to a politician who had changed his old party allegiance. Other laws of honour were, however, more strictly enforced, and in spite of the charges of corruption made against Bratiano, venality and dishonesty seemed less frequent than in Russia or in Turkey. I was, however, amused by an anecdote of a Phanariot of high rank who had to flee the country for deliberately slipping into his own pocket a valuable silver bell, which he had noticed on the table of a Cabinet Minister during the latter's short absence from his study. The Minister, who had left

him there, could not find the bell on his return, when he wanted to summon a clerk. His servants did not know what had become of it. But the high-born thief, as he opened the door on leaving the room, turned his back to it, in order to make a formal parting bow. As he did so, the door handle caught in his hinder frock-coat pocket. The bell, pressed by it as he struggled to disentangle himself, emitted a series of resounding peals, and produced an inrush of office boys and doorkeepers, more easily imagined than described. The highly placed thief, threatened by the grave scandal of a public exposure, and perhaps an eventual prosecution, left Roumania the same night, so I was told, in the hope of better luck at Monte Carlo.

Queen Elizabeth, a Princess of Wied, widely known as the gifted poetess 'Carmen Sylva,' was in some respects more beloved and esteemed than her able but somewhat taciturn husband. Her charm of manner was very attractive, and I had the privilege of seeing a good deal of her, for she was busy just then in translating into English, with the help of a young English lady, who lived at King's Langley in Hertfordshire, a collection of old Roumanian ballads, under the title of *Songs of the Dimbovitza*, the little stream on which Bucharest was built. During the last weeks of my Chargé d'Affaireship she suffered a good deal from ill health, and was advised to seek rest and change of air, in search of which she spent several weeks at Venice. The dream, which she had for a time encouraged, of a marriage of the Crown Prince with her friend Mademoiselle Vacaresco, had been finally dispelled by the opposition of the leaders of all the Roumanian political parties, and he eventually became the husband of an English Princess, the daughter of the Duke and

Duchess of Edinburgh and Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, thus creating a fresh link between the Court of Bucharest and those of Great Britain and of Russia.

I took advantage of my residence in Roumania to visit, from the villa at Sinaia, which I shared with the Austrian Military Attaché, almost every province or 'department' of the kingdom: for my work during these summer months, when the Parliament at Bucharest was not sitting, was very light. I rode over a large portion of the picturesque Carpathian region: I visited Budapest and Belgrade, and returned by Herkulesbad and Orsova, pausing there to see the statue of the Virgin and Child, which marked the last stand of Kossutli's Hungarian revolutionary army in 1849, when its fugitive leaders crossed the Danube into Turkey. On this latter tour I had a slightly unpleasant experience. At Eton I had become a good swimmer, and at Therapia nearly rivalled Lord Byron and Mr. Aikenhead by swimming with an athletic chaplain, Mr. Cockshott, from Therapia to the opposite shore of the Bosphorus, at a point where its stream is very narrow. As I descended the Danube in an open rowing boat, the August noon day proved exceedingly oppressive. I had not had a bath for some twenty-four hours, and a plunge into the river was a great and irresistible temptation. I swam, or rather floated, without the least effort down the stream and, revelling in the coolness of its waters and forgetting the rapidity of its current, soon outdistanced my much heavier boat. My attempt to return to it, against the current, proved more exhausting than I had expected, and I saw little hope of successfully landing on the rocky shores of the river, crowned as they were by lofty crags. At last, I beheld, near the southern bank of the Danube, a flat island, covered with picturesque Turkish houses, which

turned out to be quite an interesting place, Ada Kaleh (or Fort Island) by name. Although the banks on either side of it were Serbian or Roumanian, it had itself remained, after the Treaty of Berlin, a solitary, perhaps forgotten, fragment of Ottoman territory, and was apparently full of turbaned Turks and their veiled wives and daughters. This circumstance increased my reluctance to land on it without clothes, but before emerging from the water, I hailed a friendly Turk, and obtained from him the loan of a bath-towel, arrayed in which I awaited the sluggish arrival of my boat. We soon passed the great defile of the Iron Gates, and landed at the Roumanian port of Verciorova, whence I returned by train to Bucharest and Sinaia.

Desirous of becoming acquainted with Moldavia and the region at the mouth of the Danube, I next visited the picturesque Moldavian capital Jassy, situated in lovely surroundings, and received there a hospitable welcome from the Russian Consul-General, M. de Giers. I crossed the Pruth to Ungheny in Russian Bessarabia, and spent a day at Ismail, both of them full of the curious race of Russian and Polish Jews, whose claim to the enjoyment of equal rights with the children of the soil, based on a clause in the Treaty of Berlin, was one of the problems continually evaded by the rulers of Roumania. As Peter the Great had taxed the beards of the Staroviertsi, or Russian 'Old Believers,' Prince Couza, when joint Hospodar of Wallachia and Moldavia, had levied a duty on the long curly locks of his Hebrew subjects, menacing them, unless they paid it, with the scissors of his officials. This unkindly practice had, since his deposition, been abandoned. These Jews belonged to the Ashkenazim or German-Polish branch of the Hebrew race as distinct from the Sephardim or

Hebrew victims of the Spanish Inquisition, but their colloquial language was a mainly German jargon. They had a theatre of their own at Bucharest, at which I once witnessed a curious play, based on Old Testament history, and acted in the so-called Yiddish dialect by a purely Jewish company. The subject was the reign of King Saul, and his eventual supersession by David, and the audience was almost entirely Jewish. The acting was good and realistic; for the Jews have always been proficient in the arts, both of music and of the drama. But I could not help being a good deal amused at one of its most characteristic scenes, which reproduced the conflict between Samuel and Saul as to the disposal of the cattle captured from the Amalekites. Both personages were represented by elderly Hebrews, with the familiar curly locks and ample beards, and the arguments on either side were followed with keen interest by the audience. They were mainly economic and practical: the king urged the unwisdom of ruthlessly massacring the cattle, when so many of the cows were on the point of calving. The prophet pleaded that, if killed with Kosher rites, a large sum might be obtained for the royal treasury by disposing of the meat and skins to enterprising local butchers and other traders. The probable effect of these alternatives formed the subject of a long economic discussion, which soon became bitter and even angry, Samuel at last exclaiming in despair, 'Aber, lieber König, seyen Sie doch nicht so unvernünftig.' (But, dear King, pray don't be so unreasonable.) The spectators followed every argument with keen interest, those near me, supposing that a Gentile might be imperfectly acquainted with Old Testament history, good-naturedly endeavouring to explain the whole plot to me. I was, however, secretly disappointed at not

witnessing, as I had hoped to do, the 'hewing in pieces' of Agag, either owing to the natural reluctance of the actor representing him to be attacked even with wooden swords, or perhaps on the classic dramatic principle of 'ne coram populo pueros Medea trucidet.' Indeed, if I remember rightly, the disaster on Mount Gilboa was not actually exhibited on the stage, but only described, in the true spirit of the Grecian muse, by an eye-witness, fresh from the field of battle.

I managed, during the summer, to find time for a visit to Sofia, where I was the guest of my kind friends Sir Nicholas O'Conor, then Chargé d'Affaires, and his wife, and had an interesting interview with Stambuloff, at that time the *de facto* dictator of Bulgaria. He had, when he received me, a loaded pistol on his desk, as a precaution against possible assassins: for M. Hitrovo had just organized a fresh revolutionary conspiracy against the rule of Prince Ferdinand of Coburg. I did not see His Highness, who was absent at Euxinograd, his villa on the shore of the Black Sea, but I heard an amusing account of his reception of O'Conor, of Mr. Chirol, then a brilliant newspaper correspondent, and of an old friend of my own, at that time an English member of Parliament. O'Conor as a diplomatist was introduced first and assured by the Prince that his one aim was to act in accordance with the desires of the Great Powers, and especially of England. The representative of *The Times*, Mr. Chirol, was informed by His Highness that the land of liberty and home of a free Press, which had given birth to Mr. Gladstone, was the guide to which Bulgaria chiefly looked for counsel and support. When the British member of Parliament's turn came, the Prince was pacing up and down a long gallery, but he stopped to point to a range of mountains just visible from its many windows, drama-

tically remarking, as he looked towards them, that he himself held in those mountains the 'key to Macedonia,' but hoped not to be compelled to use it, an unfortunate remark, inasmuch as this particular range lay in the wrong direction, rising as it did north and not south of Sofia. All his three visitors were a good deal amused when at dinner in the evening they compared their respective impressions, but they agreed that the Prince, notwithstanding this theatrical blunder, was a man of shrewdness and ability, a judgment which, in spite of his inadvised policy at the time of the Great European War of 1914, will probably be confirmed by posterity.

During my visit to Sofia, I paid a complimentary call on the leading Bulgarian statesman, Stambuloff. He resembled a Tartar in some of his features, and his appearance recalled to my mind a remark of another Bulgarian patriot, the so-called 'pseudo-Regent' Jivkoff: 'There are not many Bulgarians who have not a Turk or Tartar Bashi-Bazouk among their immediate male progenitors.' Stambuloff received me in quite an unpretending house, in a small and simply furnished reception-room. He spoke very frankly on the difficulties of the situation. He lamented the weakness of Prince Alexander in yielding to the menaces of Russia, and I fancy that he had no great love or esteem for the semi-Saxon, semi-Austrian Prince who had succeeded to the Bulgarian throne. I asked if I could pay my respects to Madame Stambuloff, but was told that she received no visitors other than those of her own sex, a curious survival in a country whose statesmen had received a mainly Russian education.

I ought perhaps not to omit all mention of another somewhat interesting visit which I paid, as the guest of Captain Crowe of H.M.S. *Cockatrice*, to the historic

Russian fortress of Ismail, to Galatz and to the Sulina mouth of the Danube. Galatz was a place of some political importance as the seat of the International Danube Commission, composed of representatives of the six Great Powers, as well as of Turkey and Roumania, which controlled and regulated the navigation of the river from the Iron Gates to the Black Sea. Our own delegate upon it was Sir Percy Sanderson, a brother of the eminent diplomatist who was afterwards raised to the peerage for his long and brilliant services as Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Sir Percy, who was afterwards promoted to be Consul-General at New York, had at that time a Russian servant, a member of the curious Russian sect of the 'Skoptzi' or voluntary eunuchs, whose practice it is to castrate, after allowing them to beget a single child, all their youths, once they reach the age of puberty. This mutilation is usually effected, as happened, I believe, in the case of Sanderson's servant, after the victim has been rendered unconscious by the administration of a powerful anæsthetic, and a similar operation is said to have been performed on a very unwilling Russian Governor, who had paid a large sum for the privilege of witnessing this curious rite. The sect, oddly enough, was a wealthy one. Its members are active traders, and it was persecuted by the Russian Holy Synod, but to some extent protected by the agents of the Russian Government abroad. It possessed extensive colonies, both at Bucharest and Jassy, to which all, or nearly all, the Russian 'isvostchiki' or cab-drivers in both those cities belonged. I was a good deal interested in the history and customs of these singular religionists, whose doctrine was based on the text, 'If thy hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee.' I was inclined at first to connect them

with the 'priestless' or 'Bezpopovstsi' adherents of the ancient pre-Niconian Church, for, owing to the supposed loss of the Apostolic succession, ever since the days of Nicon they reject her orders and sacraments, including that of marriage, as invalid. I am, however, inclined to believe that they represent an earlier outbreak of fanatical asceticism, unconnected with the schism of the 'Old Believers.' One of them, a Bucharest cabman, with whom I had struck up a friendship, invited me to tea at his house, and showed me there a curious picture of the Emperor Peter III, whom they revere as a prophet and martyr of peculiar sanctity. They believe him to have been murdered by his licentious consort, the Empress Catherine, on account of his pious inability or reluctance to consummate his marriage with her. He had, however, so my cab-driving friend believed, been miraculously kept alive, after her attempt to have him killed, which had proved unsuccessful owing to divine protection, and had been borne by angels, like the prophet Habakkuk when he brought food to Daniel in the lions' den, all the way from Tobolsk. Hence he would some day miraculously reappear at Moscow, as the herald of the final judgment. I imagine that the numerous Skoptzi settled at Bucharest and other Roumanian towns enjoyed a certain freedom of access to Russia, and protection at the hands of the Russian authorities. Notwithstanding the persecution to which they were subjected on Russian soil, they were said to enjoy access to their own native land in return for acting as potential spies for the Russian authorities in Roumania. Like so many Mohammedan eunuchs, those of them whom I saw in Roumania were notable for their corpulence. My own cab-driving friend and host at its capital was certainly no exception to this rule.

In September, 1890, Sir Frank Lascelles resumed his duties at Bucharest, and I returned to my post at Constantinople. The Secretary of the Belgian Legation, Count de Buisseret, who had travelled with me when I first visited Transylvania, and was afterwards Belgian Minister at Tangier, accompanied me on our southward drive from Rustchuk to Tirnovo. From this old historic Bulgarian capital, with the famous church in which the ancient Tzars of Bulgaria were crowned, we proceeded to the Shipka Pass, a spot famous in the history of the Russo-Turkish War, and immortalized by Verestchagin's ghastly but impressive picture at Moscow, which represents a forgotten and abandoned Russian sentry, slowly dying of frost-bite, on a snow-covered summit of the Balkans. Below it reproduces the grim inscription, adopted from a Russian official bulletin, 'Vo Shipkié vsio spokoinno' (At Shipka all is peaceful). On the southern side of the great range we parted, Buisseret to return to Roumania, and I to ride on through the vast luxuriant gardens, full of roses already beginning to fade, and ripe for the sellers of attar and other fragrant perfumes, which extended from Kazanlik to Philippopolis. Thence I took the train for Constantinople, stopping for a day with my friend Consul Cumberbatch at Adrianople, a city of great historic interest. The Wali of Adrianople was a singular old gentleman, so fanatical in his religious views that he always put on gloves before shaking hands with foreign consuls, in order to avoid any ritual defilement. One of them had once teased him by describing those with which he grasped the Pasha's hand as having been made of 'the most expensive pigskin.' He was indeed said to be so stingy that he sent all his dirty linen to be washed at his own private laundry at Sivas, in the heart of Anatolia. I paid a

formal visit to this quaint old Turk, whom I found in a very happy mood, and I had quite a pleasant conversation with him. Two days later, I was back at Therapia, just before our Embassy staff moved for the inclement winter months to Pera.

CHAPTER V

A VISIT TO INDIA

TOWARDS the end of 1890 I received a telegram from Lord Salisbury, informing me that I had been appointed, together with Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace, the author of an admirable book upon Russia, and for some years private secretary to Lord Dufferin during the stateman's Viceroyalty of India, to accompany the Cesarevitch, the future Emperor Nicholas II, who was about to visit Egypt, British India, and Ceylon, on his way to Siam, Japan, and China. I joined Sir Donald at Suez, after enjoying for a few days, at Cairo, the kind hospitality of the Sirdar and his wife, Sir Francis and Lady Grenfell.

Sir Donald Mackenzie was a delightful travelling companion, and was full of amusing anecdotes. One of these described his success, while a newspaper correspondent at Berlin, when the famous treaty concluded there was being negotiated, in telegraphing its contents to London, before it was actually signed. He had made an arrangement with the representative of a small Balkan State, that they should exchange overcoats in the ante-room in which the plenipotentiaries hung their garments every morning, before beginning their deliberations. Wallace was to place in the coat belonging to his diplomatic friend a large packet of five-pound notes; and the friend was to put in that belonging to his accomplice the full text, in its final form, of the Treaty of Berlin. The exchange was duly effected, and as soon as he had obtained the treaty, he started by a midday train from the German capital for Brussels, as the German Press Bureau would, he knew, have hung up so important a message had it been dispatched without the imprimatur of the

censor. He arrived at the Belgian capital late at night, and had a good deal of trouble in persuading the telegraph officials to transmit so long a message as the full text of the treaty, the cost of which, in view of the voluminous character of the document, amounted to several hundred pounds. Joint persuasiveness and resolution overcame their hesitation, and early on the following morning all the articles of the treaty appeared in a special edition of *The Times*, simultaneously with, if not actually before, their signature by the representatives of the interested Powers at Berlin.

A better known story which he told me turned on the speech prepared by Lord Beaconsfield, as Senior British Plenipotentiary at the Congress, which he had at first determined to deliver in French. Lord Ampthill (then Lord Odo Russell) was at that time Ambassador at Berlin, and was horrified to learn that Lord Beaconsfield contemplated French oratory, for he feared that the British Premier's unfamiliarity with the language, and above all his inability to pronounce it correctly, would produce a ridiculous and therefore a disastrous impression. He accordingly approached the Prime Minister and observed that both he himself and many others had been greatly disappointed at his decision to address the Congress in French, instead of in English. 'Why not?' said Disraeli. 'French is the diplomatic language, and it is proper that my strongest, and, as I hope, my most impressive, speech should be made in it.' 'Well,' replied Ampthill, 'you must do as you please. All I have to say is that Prince Bismarck, and all the other great statesmen assembled here, have been looking forward to hearing one of the greatest masters of the English language defend his policy in the tongue and with the oratorical genius of Burke and of Charles James Fox.

Any fool who has served a few years in diplomacy can argue in French; but only a great master of English like yourself can afford delight and subjugate a world-wide audience by addressing it in the language to which his brilliant literary works have imparted an imperishable fame.' This ingenious argument carried the day, and Lord Beaconsfield decided to address the Congress in English.[1]

Wallace and I reached Bombay from Egypt a few days before Christmas, and were the guests at Malabar Hill of its Governor, Lord Harris, a Kentish landowner, and a prominent Conservative politician. He at once directed me to arrange with his private secretary, Colonel Rhodes, a brother of the great South African statesman, the procedure for the reception of their Russian Imperial visitor. But he rather disconcerted me, when we came to discuss details, by announcing that he did not propose to wear his official uniform when he met the Cesarevitch at the Apollo Bunder. He also said that he did not intend to place him on his right in the carriage which was to convey them to Malabar Point, and this notwithstanding the fact that a similar compliment had been paid to him by the

[1] Count Schouvaloff, when Russian Ambassador in London, was fond of relating, in connection with the Congress of Berlin, an anecdote of a Christmas party at Knowsley. As the bells ushering in Christmas Day rang out, glasses of elderberry wine were handed to the guests, and Disraeli, who was one of them, observed that one of the effects of this potent beverage was to make those who imbibed it see double. 'You must, my dear Lord,' said Schouvaloff, 'have had some of it at luncheon, on the day when you persisted at Berlin in seeing two Bulgarias, one north and the other south of the Balkan range, a delusion which dictated your decision to divide Eastern Roumelia from the new Bulgarian principality, when, as a matter of fact, both these regions are inhabited by a homogeneous people, professing the same Orthodox religious faith, and speaking the same Slavonic tongue.'

King of the Hellenes at Athens, and the Khedive of Egypt at Cairo. I observed, as politely as I could, that this programme was contrary to the rules and traditions of international etiquette, inasmuch as the Cesarevitch was the heir-apparent to a foreign throne, and was in this capacity entitled, like the Crown Prince of Germany, when he came, during my stay there, to Madrid, to the honours usually paid to a crowned head. Lord Harris was a quick-tempered man, impatient of contradiction, and he strongly resented my insistence – although Colonel Rhodes saw my point – that he should go on board in uniform to welcome the Imperial guest, and should place him on his right hand in the carriage.

There was indeed a precedent for the course which he proposed, in the case of Prince Albert Victor; but I pointed out that as the latter was a British subject, without a representative character, it was right that the Governor of Bombay, as the Queen's ex-officio personal representative, should take precedence of him. The position of the Cesarevitch was, I thought, entirely different: for he was the heir and personal representative, on British soil, of a foreign monarch, the Emperor of Russia, and should at least receive the same civilities as would have been shown him had he paid a state visit to England.

Lord Harris appears to have thought that to make this concession would be to diminish the dignity of his own office as the Queen's personal representative, an attribute which he quite rightly claimed for himself, for the Viceroy and for the Governor of the Presidency of Madras. He contended, with some show of reason, that if a foreign heir to the throne of his country were to pay a visit to London, the Queen would not herself meet him at the landing-place, or railway

station. This was, I contended, the privilege of Her Majesty's sex, for he might himself claim, if his theory were pushed to all its consequences, to keep his hat on when calling on the wives of high officials at Bombay, on the ground that the Queen, should she visit another lady there, would not, on entering the drawing-room, remove her bonnet. I accordingly insisted on a reference of this point to Lord Salisbury, who had sent me to India as a servant of the Foreign Office; but the suggestion was resented by Lord Harris as an impertinent interference with his control of the arrangements. Wallace saw my point and pressed it on the Governor, who, however, refused to communicate, or allow me to do so, with Lord Salisbury, except through the channel of the Secretary for India, Viscount Cross. I urged, but in vain, the loss of time, more especially at Christmas, when so many Cabinet Ministers were absent on their holidays from London, and the folly, on political grounds, of exhibiting to our Russian guests such a fear of the effect of a Russian Prince's visit on the minds of the people of India as to cause their rulers to forego the common courtesies of international etiquette. The Governor was very angry with me and enjoying, as I did, his hospitality, I found myself placed in a somewhat uncomfortable position, obliging me, on the ground of public interest, to do my duty to Lord Salisbury, as my own immediate chief, and at the same time to avoid any unpleasant or untoward diplomatic incident. Wallace, however, at length persuaded him to dispatch my telegram to Lord Salisbury through Lord Cross, and two days later his answer arrived. It was to the effect that Lord Harris must make his own arrangements, but should be guided by the precedents followed in the case of the Prince of Wales. On that occasion he had

been apparently received at Calcutta by the Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, though there seemed some uncertainty as to uniforms and positions in the carriage. The more recent case of Prince Albert Victor, on which Lord Harris had relied, was thus ruled out, as not bearing on that of a Prince who was not an immediate heir-apparent to a Crown.

The Governor accordingly fell back upon a compromise. He met the Cesarevitch in person at the Apollo Bunder, but wearing a plain frock-coat and white helmet, and he took, as emphasizing his own official superiority, the right-hand seat in the carriage. He afterwards atoned for this assumption of superiority by taking a back seat and placing Lady Harris by the side of the Cesarevitch, when they drove after luncheon, all of them in plain clothes, through the city of Bombay. He, however, in going in to dinner, preceded His Imperial Highness, instead of asking him, in accordance with diplomatic etiquette, to lead the way with Lady Harris. The Russian staff were a good deal shocked at this breach of international custom, and still more so when at Ahmedabad, where the Cesarevitch took the right-hand seat in the carriage, Lord Harris requested him, with great politeness, to 'take the lower room.' The members of the Russian staff were so scandalized by this arrangement that they discarded their uniforms for the rest of the tour, till it was rectified by the Viceroy at Calcutta. However, they were to some extent relieved or consoled by the great military display of troops, both at Bombay, and elsewhere, which lined the streets to present arms to the Imperial guest. In the Rajput and Central Indian Native States, Jodhpore, Jeypore, Baroda, Ulwar, and Gwalior, the native sovereigns always gave the Cesarevitch precedence, and on his arrival at Cal-

cutta the Viceroy, Lord Lansdowne, met him in levée dress at the station, and placed him on his own right hand in the carriage which conveyed them to Government House. The same course was carefully followed by the Governor of Madras, Lord Wenlock, thus dispelling the unpleasant impression produced by the unfortunate incidents at Bombay and at Ahmedabad. A minor diplomatic storm in a tea-cup disturbed my peace a few days before we left. Lord Harris had given a garden party at Parel, for the purpose of presenting to the Cesarevitch the many important local residents, who were too numerous to meet him at dinner.

Next day I received a remonstrance from the Turkish Consul, complaining that his name had been inserted among the 'natives' as distinct from 'the European gentlemen' invited. This, he said, was a monstrous outrage. So far from being a native of India, or of Asia, he was a pure European Slav, the descendant of a race of Christian Bosniac nobles, who had only become Moslems in order to preserve their lands, after the Ottoman conquest of European Turkey. His Western origin was certainly attested by his blue eyes and fair beard, and he might easily have been mistaken for an Englishman, a Dane, or a German. In order still further to placate him, I asked the Political Secretary, Sir William Lee-Warner, if he thought I could invite him to meet some members of the Russian Imperial Staff at the Yacht Club, from which natives of India were excluded. Lee-Warner, a wise man of the world, discouraged this idea, for if the Turk came in wearing the tarboosh, which was the badge of his Mohammedan religion, some peppery old 'Qui Hai' might, he thought, make a fuss about a 'native' being brought into the Club, and create a fresh 'untoward incident.' I agreed, and confined

myself to a correction in the paper which included him among the 'European' as distinct from the 'native' guests at Parel.

The etiquette observed, more especially at the Viceregal banquet at Calcutta, was a careful reproduction of that followed on the occasion of the Prince of Wales' reception by Lord Northbrook, who met him in uniform at Howrah, and placed him on his right in the carriage. The dinner was served in the great dining-room of Government House, Calcutta, while two processions, one of them that of the Cesarevitch, and the other that of the Viceroy, simultaneously entered from different directions. The representatives of the Queen and of the Tzar each faced one another on opposite sides of the table. At private dinners and luncheons, however, as well as when driving together, the Viceroy always gave the precedence due, *inter pares*, to his Imperial guest. I was subsequently warmly thanked by Lord Salisbury for insisting on these questions being referred to the Foreign Office, as also by the Prince of Wales, afterwards King Edward VII.

Simultaneously with the landing of the Cesarevitch at Bombay, another somewhat comic 'untoward incident' occurred. As His Imperial Highness was driving from the harbour to Malabar Point, an apparently respectable European was seen running with all his might after their carriage. He was moreover shouting and waving over his head what appeared to be a large canvas bag. Two policemen, supposing him to be a Nihilist armed with a bomb doubtless stuffed with explosives, pounced on him, and as he was unable to express himself in English, locked him up in jail pending further measures. An interpreter, able to speak Russian, having been meanwhile procured, it transpired that the suspected anarchist was

a special Imperial Courier from St. Petersburg, with a bagful of official letters for the Cesarevitch and the members of his staff. He was immediately released, and his bag sent to Malabar Point, where the tale of his seizure and brief imprisonment afforded much amusement to the Russian Imperial party.

I need not describe in detail our large, varied and interesting tour through the Native States of Rajputana and Central India, Jodhpore, Ulwar, Gwalior, and Baroda. At all these picturesque cities splendid banquets were given by the great Native Chiefs, who attended, but were prevented by caste and traditional reasons from taking any part in them. At Jeypore the Prime Minister, a learned Baboo, had covered the walls of the dining-room with texts of Scripture about the blessings of peace and 'the turning of swords into ploughshares.' He himself made a speech in English about the joy of the people of India at beholding the Imperial Heir of Russia 'not descending with hostile hordes through the Khyber Pass, but skilfully aiming weapons, unstained with human gore, at fierce tigers and other savage inmates of the jungle.' One feature in these picturesque receptions by the Princes 'in subordinate alliance with the Government of India' was the question of the acceptance by the illustrious visitors of the rich presents offered on these occasions by the great native potentates at Durbars. The precedent of Viceregal visits to their Courts, when, after a solemn reception, the Chiefs laid, as a form of tribute, splendid gifts at the feet of the Viceroy, who touches and then 'remits' them, was carefully followed. Prince George of Greece, who was nothing if not frank, was of opinion that both he and his cousin should not be precluded from retaining them, as, when at Sandringham, he had noticed many gorgeous presents from

native potentates which had been brought back from India by 'Uncle Edward.' Prince George, a pleasant and cheery naval officer, was moreover very sensitive about his royal father's dignity, and complained that His Hellenic Majesty's name was omitted at banquets when the toasts of the Queen-Empress and the Russian Tzar were drunk. He argued with me that as all Kings were equal, by the rules of the Congress of Vienna, he took precedence *inter se* in accordance with the dates of their respective accessions to their thrones. He also argued that the name of the King of the Hellenes should always be included in their toasts, and the Greek National Anthem played by our military bands together with those of Great Britain and of Russia. I promised him that this should be done; but it was not always easy to keep my promise, for it sometimes happened that a local regiment had not got the Greek hymn, and it had to be hastily procured, often from some considerable distance.

There were of course numerous shooting expeditions at which tigers, panthers, and other beasts of prey were killed by the Cesarevitch and his Greek cousin. On these occasions I was habitually attached, as a Russian scholar, to Dr. Rambach, His Imperial Highness's physician, who insisted on following his young master on horseback, with a large box full of bandages and surgical appliances. Apart from his anxieties for his charge's safety, the worthy doctor loathed the fatiguing task of cantering and galloping entailed by these trying expeditions. 'Proklataia Ochota' (accursed hunting) he termed them as he bumped along after me, over the rough uneven ground of the jungle. I myself took no active part, for I was too short-sighted to be a good shot, nor did any of the other Englishmen in the suite; but I had one or two pleasant runs

after pigs, on a beautiful horse which was lent me by a former friend of my father's, a charming Rajput gentleman named Narain Singh, long employed in the Department for suppressing 'Thuggee and Dacoity.'

From Central India we went on to Delhi and Lahore, took part in a great shoot near Amritsar, and ended our Indian tour in the Madras Presidency, as the guests of its Governor Lord Wenlock at Gindy. There I witnessed in his garden the 'basket trick' performance, and a curious exhibition it proved to be. The conjurer was naked, save for a loin-cloth, and all the instruments of his art, except the basket, were concealed in a tiny box. He was attended by a small boy, whom he proceeded to bind hand and foot, and whom he crammed into the basket, its lid being then pressed down and kept fast by a rope. Drawing a sharp sword, the conjurer drove it several times through the sides and lid of the basket. It was then opened and proved to be empty. Thereupon he whistled, and the little boy, whom I had, as I thought, last seen packed beneath its lid, reappeared from a group of spectators a few yards off. How the trick was done I cannot explain. I was entirely unconscious of having been mesmerized, and so were the other spectators with whom I compared impressions. I certainly fancied at the time that all that I saw had really happened.

In Ceylon, we had several successful further shoots at Neuvera Elia, and were also shown Buddha's tooth, at Kandy, the gorgeous gardens at Perahenia, besides the curious spectacle of the beguiling of wild elephants by tame ones, often females, into the kraals prepared for their reception. In one case the laws of caste occasioned me some trouble. I had with me a high-

caste native servant to whom I had taken a great liking, but who was rather shy of crossing the black water which separates India from Ceylon. One day, at Colombo, he came to me in a flood of tears, to complain that one of the Russian officers, occupying a room next to mine, had ordered him to defile himself by emptying slops from domestic utensils, which no man of high caste can handle, or even touch, without pollution. I consoled him by a promise that I would myself perform this impure sweepers' duty, which could not harm me, inasmuch as, being an English sahib, I was unaffected by, and indeed superior to, any form of caste. From that moment his devotion to me was almost childish. I explained the position as best I could to my Russian friend, who only laughed at me for humouring these silly superstitions. When I reminded him that a thoughtless violation of native caste prejudices had helped to produce the great Indian Mutiny, he only laughed and replied that deference to such follies would not be tolerated by the Russian Government, and that the only way to cure this nonsense was a smart and wholesome application of the stick.

During our tour, Sir Donald Wallace had many talks with the Cesarevitch on the political conditions of Russia, and amongst other questions, they discussed the Russian treatment of the Jews. Wallace dwelt on the impolicy of a system which made enemies of a gifted race. The future Emperor struck us both as quite receptive of unfamiliar political ideas, and as ready to attempt to understand them. But the influence of the school of Pobiedonostzeff was not one which could be easily dispelled. The disastrous war, a few years later, with Japan helped to break the prestige of the old system; and when the Great

World War broke out, it collapsed, with no real effort at resistance, before a second Mutiny of the Nore.

I was struck by the somewhat rough fashion in which my high-caste native servant was treated by the Russians. They insisted on making him clear up their slops. When I told him that I would do so for him his gratitude seemed almost beyond expression. He shed tears of thankfulness over me; but he was very contemptuous of the Russians. I have little doubt as to which is the more proper attitude in treating with peoples of the temperament and susceptibilities of the Indians; though it is, of course, possible that the harsher Russian methods are justified when one is dealing with more backward or barbarous races, such as are, I believe, found in Central Asia.

After we parted in Ceylon, I had one kind letter from the then Cesarevitch in reply to my written congratulations on his escape from the murderous attack of a Japanese fanatic at Tokio, and I afterwards wrote to him to congratulate him on the birth of his son, the bright boy who was butchered with his sisters and mother at Ekaterinburg by the 'Soviet' assassins. On second thoughts, I deemed it more tactful, in view of the anti-Russian policy at Tehran, which it was my duty to follow, to await a more propitious moment, which, however, never came. The Empress, whom I had seen as a lovely girl at her father's house at Darmstadt, I again met at Windsor just before her marriage. She was at that time making difficulties about her conversion to the Russian Church, and especially about some expressions in the religious ceremony in which she was required, but refused, to anathematize certain Lutheran doctrines. Queen Vic-

toria had put strong pressure upon her to take this step, pointing out that a wife should belong to her husband's Church. It was agreed that some offensive expressions condemning Lutheranism, in the Orthodox ritual, should be omitted. About a fortnight after my visit, she honoured my second sister Mary by her presence at their marriage at Windsor, before she herself set forth to meet her future bridegroom in Russia, in happy ignorance of the fearful fate awaiting them both. When the Cesarevitch bade me good-bye at Colombo, he gave me his photograph, signed by himself, but it was, I believe, afterwards sold by one of my servants at Zanzibar.

While on the subject of photographs, I may recall a somewhat comical incident. After one of the tiger hunts which so vexed Dr. Rambach, a photograph of the Imperial party was published in the English illustrated papers, representing the Cesarevitch unconventionally seated, with a cheroot in his mouth, on the corpse of a panther which had fallen to his gun. The censor at St. Petersburg absurdly regarded this picture as derogatory to the dignity of its Imperial hero, and ordered it to be 'caviared' or blacked out in printer's ink, greatly to the amusement of his staff.

I was myself anxious to see more of India, and to visit Kashmir, and if possible Afghanistan. But before I could do so, I received an intimation from the Foreign Office that I had been transferred to the post of First Secretary in Egypt, and was to proceed to take up my new duties at Cairo, as successor to Mr. Gerald Portal, who had just been appointed British Agent and Consul-General at Zanzibar. This appointment I willingly accepted, for Cairo was a post of great political importance, as well as a very pleasant place of resi-

dence. I hastened to take the first steamer bound for Suez. Before, however, settling in Egypt, I paid a farewell visit to Sir William White, whom I saw for the last time, and who expressed his warm appreciation of my action in connection with the Russian Imperial visit at Bombay. This was our last meeting, for little more than a year later he caught a cold which killed him, at Berlin on his way home from Vienna. I had been fortunate in having two such able and brilliant chiefs as Morier and White, and was now to serve under a third, of equal merit and distinction, in the person of Sir Evelyn Baring.

Before I finally left India, or to be correct Ceylon, I received very flattering letters from my first and latest chiefs, congratulating me on the stand I had made in regard to the proper official reception of the Cesarevitch. I may add that on returning to England, my action in regard to the reception of the heir to the Russian Imperial Throne was strongly endorsed by no less a personage than Lord Salisbury himself, as well as by the then Prince of Wales, who had not yet succeeded to the Throne. I print below one of these letters—from Sir William White.

CONSTANTINOPLE.
11*th March* 1891.

MY DEAR MR. HARDINGE,

You will not perhaps imagine how gratified I was at the receipt and perusal of your several Cesarevitch letters, one from Egypt, posted just as you were leaving that country, which is now your temporary home; then three from our Indian Empire, and the last, one from Ceylon.

I was unable to reply to any one of these, not exactly

knowing where a line would catch you. Receive therefore now, however late, my best thanks for every one of them. They were not only highly interesting, but the way in which you bravely stood out for international as against Anglo-Indian 'etiquette' pleased me much and made me quite proud of the honour of having you serving under me – which was actually the case then, though it is no longer so now. I am sure Lord Salisbury saw you were right all along, both in principle and in form, that you showed all the necessary tact and firmness towards these Indo-Olympians, and I am sure you have done yourself good by all this, as well as your Government and country, whilst many another might have been wrecked by such a dilemma. Sir Robert will, I am sure, be delighted and say you were 'the right man in the right place.'

You may imagine how sorry I am to lose you from here, but I see it could not be helped, and I must, alas, forgo the loss. I daresay Mr. Portal will remain as Consul-General for good at Zanzibar, and there is a large field of interest, instruction and amusement now open for you, which will, I hope, tend and direct you, and I wish it with my whole heart, to more rapid promotion.

As soon as I got your letter about leave, I telegraphed to Barrington for it to be sent you, but adding that you no longer belonged to this Embassy. Here is his reply. From this it is not clear whether you are to go home, before taking up your new post. If you do, it will be, I trust, this way, and then 'Au Revoir.' Hoping these lines will catch you,

Yours ever,

WILLIAM WHITE.

During the next ten years I held various diplomatic posts in Africa, and became H.B.M. Minister at Tehran in 1900. Here I remained for the years previous to my move to Brussels in 1906. I have decided, however, to deal with my Eastern and African experiences in a separate volume, and will therefore say nothing of them at this point.

CHAPTER VI

BELGIUM

THE General Election of 1906 overthrew the Conservative Government which had so long held office under the wise rule of Lord Salisbury, and had, moreover, as its final achievement, restored peace throughout South Africa. The grotesque 'Chinese Labour' cry proved a godsend to the Liberals, and the Cabinet formed by Mr. (afterwards Sir Henry) Campbell-Bannerman was perhaps the most Radical Government which England had as yet seen.

I went down to Gloucestershire to support the Tory champion for the Stroud division, in which our little country place lay, travelling with a very agreeable Welsh companion, bound on a similar errand, to Swansea. Our talk in the train turned on the character and future of Mr. Lloyd George, whom our own party already deemed the most dangerous and detestable of demagogues, but whom my friend had known from his youth. He had, in fact, quite recently received a mark of his kindness and goodwill. He had, he continued, a boy who had fought in the recent Boer War, and who was to ride in the procession of the victorious British troops headed by Lord Roberts, and he was naturally anxious to have a glimpse of him in so memorable a pageant. He happened by chance, at a theatre, to come across Lloyd George. The two men, one a Tory and the other a Radical, chaffed each other about the disastrous defeat soon about to overwhelm their respective parties. In the course of this talk my friend from Swansea alluded to the South African triumphal entry, in which his great desire was to see his own son. Lloyd George said nothing at the moment, but on the following morning a ticket from

him arrived giving the young officer's family places in the window of one of the chief public buildings in Whitehall, from which the whole show could be seen. I asked if he thought that this might have been a sop intended to influence his vote at the coming dissolution. 'Never,' he said, 'Lloyd George knows well enough that no favour and no bribe, however considerable, would induce me to vote for a Radical. It was a mere mark of affection between two old schoolmates for one another, and his kindly and generous behaviour on this occasion was characteristic of his loyal affection for the friends and comrades of his youth.'

I have never been in sympathy with 'Lloyd Georgian' political aspirations, but it is pleasant to be able to recall a trivial incident showing that the devil is not always as black as he is painted.

The Chinese Labour election shattered all the hopes of the Tories in Gloucestershire; many of the great Whig landowners, men such as Lord Lansdowne and Lord Berkeley, had always voted 'yellow' as opposed to the Tory 'blue,' and their tenants and dependents were often confused by being told that they ought to vote 'blue,' whilst a number of more thoughtful electors among the smaller gentry and professional men, who since the abolition of the corn laws had been free traders, did not quite understand Mr. Chamberlain's Imperial Preference proposals. The effect on the Tories was disastrous. The Liberals were a little uneasy at the advent of a so-called 'Labour Party' which sent a large sprinkling of manual workers into Parliament and showed a disposition to rebel against the older and more Whiggish type of Liberal. The presence of working men in Parliament was indeed no

novelty. I knew Mr. Burt, a Northumberland miner, but a thorough gentleman in feeling and manners, who, like Mr. Broadhurst, obtained Ministerial, though still somewhat secondary, appointments under Gladstone. I had the pleasure of sitting next to Mr. Burt at a public dinner just after a visit which he had paid to a Socialist Conference, or it may have been a Congress, at Brussels. Himself an orthodox Christian of the Puritan or Nonconformist type, and accustomed to teach religion in Sunday schools, he was astounded and then painfully shocked at the anti-clerical fury of the Belgian Socialists. One of them wanted the suppression of the Scriptures and of all religious teaching in the schools; another moved a resolution abolishing marriage; and a third went one better and proposed to abolish God, regardless of the difficulty of destroying a Personality which in his view had no real existence. Up to that time Mr. Bradlaugh had, I think, been the only English politician who had openly and fearlessly declared himself an atheist in an assembly which had admitted Mohammedans and Jews, but had drawn the line at the rejection of theism. I must, however, leave these digressions into speculative questions, and endeavour to describe the political situation which I now found awaiting me at Brussels.

In the new Ministry which the Queen ordered Mr. Campbell-Bannerman to form, Sir Edward Grey was appointed Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. I had known him at Balliol, but not intimately, and, chiefly through my friend Cecil Spring Rice, for he came up to Oxford about half a year before I left the University. He impressed upon me that one of my first duties at Brussels would be to ascertain and report to him the probable attitude of the Belgian Cabinet and Parliament in the event of a Franco-German war.

Although, therefore, I had not presented my credentials, or paid any official visits, I lost no time in consulting my French colleague, Monsieur Gérard. This gentleman, whom some scandalmongers asserted to be the illegitimate son of the famous Gambetta, the most conspicuous of French Republican statesmen since Thiers, had at one time served as reader in French to the German Empress, and was therefore regarded as a trustworthy authority on the varying strength and prospects of the many political tendencies now working against each other at Berlin. Monsieur Gérard did not believe that the Clerical and Conservative party still in power at Brussels, with Count de Smet de Naeyer as its leader, would offer armed resistance to a German violation – the only one to be dreaded – of the guaranteed neutrality of Belgium. He thought, however, that if a German force were to cross the Belgian frontier, no resistance would or could indeed be made by the existing Belgian army, which would probably fall back upon Antwerp, as the most powerful of the national fortresses, the *réduit national*, as the Belgians used to term it. Any attempt to reinforce the Belgian troops there, by ships from England or France, would be barred by the neutral waters of Holland. I ought to add, though this information was not derived from my French colleague, that German influence was very strong at Antwerp, where one of the most powerful shipping magnates, M. de Bary, was a German subject, while the Flemish or Flamingant party there regarded the Walloon or French-speaking population of the inland provinces of Belgium, such as Namur, Hainault and Liège, as a race distinct from their own.

I have a vivid recollection of a State visit paid to Antwerp by a Lord Mayor of London, with all his

insignia of office, mace, state coaches, and bewigged attendants, acclaimed with quite genuine friendliness by the population of the great Belgian commercial city. Processions of school children sang the British National Anthem, but in Flemish; the speeches at the Town Hall or at banquets of the Burgomaster and the other Echevins or Aldermen were delivered in the same language. Indeed the only remarks made in French, if I am not mistaken, were a brief reply by the Lord Mayor expressing his grateful appreciation of what was undoubtedly a brilliant public welcome. The tendency which I myself later noticed among some of the champions of Flemish versus French, in favour of a closer understanding with Holland, was another mark of the same sentiment.

To return to my own conversation with him, M. Gérard believed that in the event of a German invasion, a solemn appeal on behalf of the little neutral kingdom would be made for the help of the Great Powers which had guaranteed its independence and neutrality. M. Gérard himself rather doubted the success of such a step, but he thought that if England and France intervened in arms against Germany, the decisive battle would be fought not far from the historic field of Waterloo, though with what result he himself was unable even to conjecture.

When I first arrived at Brussels, King Leopold II was away at his villa on the French Riviera, and some weeks elapsed before I was able to present my credentials as Envoy at his Court. His Foreign Minister, M. de Favereau, a pleasant and dignified leader of the Catholic or Conservative party then in power, very kindly arranged for the provisional transaction of any urgent business matters, and in these I always found him as well as his official subordinates, particularly

Monsieur Van der Elst, the Permanent Secretary, exceedingly courteous and helpful. King Leopold's was a striking personality. He was the eldest son of Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, a small Thuringian duchy long ruled by descendants of the great Ascanian house, and had married Princess Charlotte, the daughter of King George IV of England. The British Government had been anxious, in order to secure the position of the 'Low Countries,' now united by the formation, after the Treaty of Vienna, of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, to promote a marriage very similar to the one negotiated in the sixteenth century by Lord Chancellor Gardiner between Queen Mary Tudor and King Philip II of Spain, and by Danby between James II's eldest daughter Mary and her cousin William III, so that England should possess a direct interest in the Dutch, as well as in the old Austro-Spanish, Netherlands and in the German Duchy of Luxemburg. Princess Charlotte was averse to this union, owing, so it was believed at the time, to the intrigues of the Princess de Lièven, then Russian Ambassadress in London, who drew unflattering pictures of the future Dutch monarch. Princess Charlotte eventually married Prince Leopold, but soon afterwards died in childbirth with her infant.

Lord Castlereagh's policy in this respect was a wise one, for the Dutch United Provinces and the Austro-Spanish or Burgundian Netherlands had long constituted the main Continental interest of England, with perhaps the sole exception of Portugal, from the days of the battles of Sluys and Alcobaca to those of Trafalgar and Waterloo. Powerless for the purposes of aggression against England, the Austrian and Dutch Netherlands served her purpose throughout the eighteenth century much as Portugal did in the Mediterranean, in the Atlantic and in the Indian Ocean. The

one great mistake which was made by our statesmen at the time of the Congress of Vienna was the sacrifice of Java, which broke the heart of its distinguished administrator Raffles.

Unfortunately the reunion of the old Burgundian Low Countries was unpopular, especially in Belgium. The Dutch Calvinist king was not in sympathy with a largely Walloon or French-speaking Roman Catholic population, which had resisted the attacks made by Joseph II on the privileges of the Church, whilst the French language, proclaimed as official by the great Napoleon, had in a large measure displaced, among the educated classes, the Low German Flemish dialect, which in Holland had already become 'Nederlandisch' or literary Dutch, and was recognized as the language of the State. The performance at the Brussels Opera of a play representing Masaniello's insurrection at Naples against the dominion of Spain, was the spark which kindled the flame of revolution, regarded by its authors as a protest against the ancient policy and reactionary spirit of the Holy Alliance. For that famous combination which had included every Power in Europe except two spiritual sovereigns, the Sultan of Turkey and the Pope, as representatives of opposing creeds, had pressed its yoke too heavily, and the expulsion of Charles X from France, and of William III in Belgium, put an end to a mere policy of petty repression, such as the effacement from the newspapers of a loyal leading article on the King of Prussia's birthday, opening with the words of Horace,

> 'Nunc est bibendum: nunc pede libero
> Pulsanda tellus,'

on the ground that the mention of a 'free foot' might suggest 'subversive ideas.'

Prince Leopold survived for many eventful years the tragic death of his wife. For a time he resided at Claremont: then he cultivated relations with a Fräulein Caroline Bauer, whose history was published not many years ago. When, in 1828, the Greeks were freed at Navarino, he was sounded as to his willingness to reign, if elected as their King, at Athens, a suggestion which his far-seeing sagacity impelled him to decline. But a new vista was opened to his ambitions when he married a daughter of the French King Louis Philippe, and thus seemed to be a suitable candidate for the vacant throne of Belgium, when its people deposed the House of Orange. The final settlement in 1839, which compelled the cession to Holland of portions of Luxemburg and Limburg, long regarded as appendages of Belgium, was a bitter pill to the Belgian patriots who had risen to shake off the Dutch yoke. The newly elected King, Leopold I, dealt with the many complications of a difficult situation with consummate ability, and, as one of Queen Victoria's uncles, wielded over her, long after her accession to the throne of England, an influence which he still further fortified by assisting to arrange her happy marriage with his own kinsman, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, better known to his adopted countrymen as the Prince Consort. I am in possession of a picture of Leopold I, which he gave to my great-uncle, Lord Howard de Walden, and which depicts a fairly good-looking man with a countenance at once intelligent and resolute.

One of the curious characteristics of King Leopold I of Belgium was his power of enduring physical pain with as much fortitude as a youthful Spartan warrior scourged at the altar of Artemis Ortheia, or a Red Indian 'brave,' an Ojibbeway or Mohican, writhing at

the stake, after capture by a rival savage tribe determined to exhaust upon its victims the most appalling refinements of barbarity. A Belgian doctor at Brussels, married to a Russian lady whom I knew very well, described to me his own father's account of a dangerous operation for the stone, which King Leopold had to undergo at his hands. Before, so he told me, beginning the operation, he suggested that the King should lie down on a bed, or at least on a sofa, and as the operation would be lengthy and painful, should first diminish its discomfort by a sedative or anæsthetic. 'Certainly not,' replied Leopold I; 'it would not be consistent with my dignity as a King that I should for a time, less or greater, become a helpless lump of flesh, with no will of its own – as the docile Jesuit has it, "sicut cadaver" – in the hands of one of my own subjects. I propose to undergo the operation without an anæsthetic of any kind, standing upright and fully conscious, as a man and a King should, with my back to the mantelpiece until it is finished.'

This position he immediately took up, erect and resolute. The surgical operation, a delicate one, took a fairly long time and was horribly painful. My informant told me how, as it proceeded, the King's features were distorted by the agony which he endured, and his cheeks and forehead were wet with perspiration. However, he kept his teeth firmly set, and not a groan or even a murmur escaped him. This physical bravery was inherited by his son and successor King Leopold II, who forgot his own closing hours of suffering in his anxiety that before his death he might append his signature to an Act introducing military conscription, which he deemed essential to the safety of his people. With all his many faults – and he would, I imagine, have been the first to own

them – he was undoubtedly a strong and a patriotic King.

In his personal appearance King Leopold II was well worthy of his forbears and of his own high office. Tall, upright, with sharp penetrating eyes, a prominent rather lengthy nose, a healthy complexion and a bushy grey beard, he had been, to judge by his earlier portraits, a handsome man. His conversation, unless he were, as sometimes happened, in an irritable mood, was almost always instructive and agreeable. At one time he had spoken English fluently, but on the first occasion on which he sat at dinner next my wife, she ventured to address him, during a silent pause amidst the hum of conversation, in English, observing that she herself had often heard at home how well he spoke it. At that moment, for reasons connected with his Congolese policy, he was not on the best of terms with our Liberal Cabinet, always prone to sentimentalism of the Exeter Hall type about slavery and other local customs to which the native populations were attached, and turning to her he said in a somewhat melancholy tone, 'Hélas, Madame, je ne parle plus comme autrefois cette langue.' Yet, endowed as he was with a powerful imagination, he had, so he told me himself, not long after his accession to the throne, conceived the idea of creating Belgian colonies or settlements in South-Eastern Asia or Australasia, in those portions of Borneo, for example, or Sumatra which were not held by the Dutch or their Spanish and Portuguese predecessors. In the early 'seventies he approached Lord Granville, at that time our Foreign Minister, on the subject. That statesman, however, having himself little taste for Colonial expansion, dissuaded Queen Victoria from giving it any fresh encouragement. Lord Granville was indeed as consistently averse as his

leader Mr. Gladstone to commitments in remote regions of the globe, and could not understand their attraction for any practical or sensible statesman.

Disappointed in this field, a few years later King Leopold turned his attention to an African region, the basin of the great Congo River, which, formed by many tributary streams from the heart of Central Africa, flowed through it till it reached Banana Point, off which its waters lost themselves in those of the Atlantic. As early as 1876, he had ascertained, after visiting London, that representative geographers, explorers and missionaries in England were prepared to meet at Brussels and discuss the opening of 'darkest Africa' to European civilization. The conference held thus in September, 1876, decided, without sketching too expensive a programme, to explore a region bounded by the Indian and Atlantic Oceans on the east and west, by the course of the Zambezi on the south, and of Egypt and the Soudan on the north. This region was to serve as a basis of further explorations, and with this object a Belgian committee collected half a million francs.

The King's idea was to establish an International Commission of explorers, supported by local committees in each civilized country, and an executive committee, of which he himself accepted the presidency. It was to provide quarters, including medical stations, for European explorers and posts for protecting the natives against the depredations of slave dealers. But when, early in 1878, Stanley had traversed Africa from its east to its west coast, an Upper Congo Committee was created with King Leopold and Colonel Deschamps as Presidents. In the following August, Stanley, having reached Africa with a caravan of Zanzibar porters, was met at the mouth of the Congo

by a flotilla of steamers. These occupied Vivi. Then in 1880 and 1881, the region of the Cataracts was traversed. Early in 1881, two new stations, Isanghila and Manyanga, were established, and early in the following December Stanley received the King's troops. From these centres agreements were concluded between the pioneers from Europe and the native African chiefs.

These labours produced a considerable impression, not only in Europe, but also in America. At the Conference of Berlin, a gathering at which France and Germany were united for a time by the policy of Jules Ferry, and by a common opposition to the Egyptian and Colonial aims of England, the United States Plenipotentiary, Mr. Kasson, expressed his own Government's desire that these new and important discoveries and explorations should be utilized for the common objects of the peace and civilization of the world under the high patronage of a 'European philanthropist,' a delicate allusion to King Leopold II. His suggestion that its Government, as that of a civilized Power, should be recognized by those of other States was immediately adopted by the Great and by many Minor Powers. In Europe, the German Government was the first to follow suit and to recognize, in November, 1884, just before the great Conference of Berlin, the flag of the International Association of the Congo, as that of a friendly State, whose accredited representatives were invited to take part in its deliberations. Accordingly, in its resolutions of April 26 and 30, 1885, the Belgian Parliament formally empowered King Leopold to combine with the separate sovereignty of Belgium, in the form of a personal union, that of the newly founded Congo Free State. The dream of a tropical Empire ruled by himself as

an absolute Prince, which the Belgian King had revealed to Lord Granville some twenty years before these events, had now become a romantic reality. On August 1, 1885, the new African 'Sovereign' notified to the other States represented at the Conference that he had appointed as his first administrator in succession to the great explorer Stanley, another African pioneer of British race, Sir F. de Winton. The new African territory was not a Belgian province: the link which united the two dominions was like that between England and Hanover, a purely personal one. But it was placed by the King under an obligation to observe neutrality, similar to that which applied to Belgium, and this decision was welcomed by all the European Powers, and especially by the British Government.

On September 17, 1888, the Liberal Government of Great Britain invited the King of the Belgians to assume the initiative in combating the slave trade carried on in the interior of Central Africa by Arab kidnappers. It also recommended the adoption by all the Powers concerned of measures which would have the effect of closing existing slave markets for foreign buyers, and preventing the diffusion of slave raids. The Brussels Conference drew up a draft Act, containing a hundred Articles, which eventually developed into the famous so-called Brussels Act. One of its proposals advocated restrictions as yet unheard of, on the commercial freedom of the great water-system of the Congo. This proposal was accordingly shelved in favour of a 10 per cent. import duty on goods imported into the Congo basin, and both Germany and England, through their Plenipotentiaries, Count Alvensleben and Lord Vivian, undertook in regard to this matter to assist the Congo Free State. The

Minor Powers re-echoed their approval. But, amidst all these disinterested, philanthropic votes at international diplomatic gatherings, a new element of difficulty had arisen. The Arab slave dealers, of whom Tippoo Tib and Rumaliza were the leaders, driven from the East African coast by European explorers and colonists, had revived the slave trade in new and piratical forms centring round their head-quarters at Kasongo. They were eventually suppressed by Colonel Dhams, the able and victorious commander of King Leopold II.

During my administration at Brussels the Congo State differed from any other government in the world in being really a single individual. When Louis XIV said that he was the State, he meant that he had concentrated within his own grasp a variety of powers formerly shared by the Crown with other organs of French national life, with the Parliaments, the Church, the great vassals, and so forth. But the Congo State, ever since the absorption in his personality of the international association which fathered it, was King Leopold and King Leopold alone; the so-called Congolese Ministers, local Governors, and other administrators were mere ephemeral emanations of his will, and had, in relation to Congolese affairs, no independent being apart from it. This constituted the essential difference between the Congo State and the other European dependencies in the basin of that river. However autocratically governed, these were real national colonies created and administered in order to serve the political and commercial aims of the various countries by which they were ruled.

The King's sovereign authority over the Congo was exercised under his immediate supervision by three Secretaries of State, for the Interior, for Finance, and

for Foreign Affairs. In the early days of the enterprise the King's right-hand man for its affairs was Baron Greindl, an able and industrious diplomatist, who failed to give his Majesty satisfaction, apparently because he recoiled from some of his plans as too ambitious. Three Ministers, of whom the chief was M. van Eetvelde, succeeded him for a time. But the King's masterful personality soon reduced them to one, and the office of State Secretary devolved for many years on M. (later Baron) van Eetvelde, who was really Premier of the State. A breakdown in his health, due to overwork, obliged him to retire temporarily into private life, and during this period, which lasted between two and three years, the King acted as his own Chief Minister, and performed the routine duties of the office with laborious minuteness. Later, M. van Eetvelde was appointed 'Ministre d'Etat du Congo attaché à personne de Sa Majesté,' in which capacity he continued to act as the King's confidential agent in his negotiations with foreign Powers and with the Belgian Government. He was even employed on private diplomatic missions not directly bearing upon Congo affairs.

One of these missions eventually brought about his downfall, for after negotiating the Bahr-el-Ghazal Agreement with Great Britain, he was disgraced, and his title of Minister of State for the Congo became merely an honorary one. His lengthy experience – he was associated with the Congo State for twenty-five years – had given to his views a broader and more statesmanlike character than those of the bureaucrats by whom he was succeeded. He habitually expressed himself with frankness; but resentment at his treatment, united to a keen sense of humour and a strong vein of sarcasm, sometimes led him into criticisms

which were perhaps not always judicious in the mouth of a responsible public servant. He had made a good deal of money out of the Congo, and had attained a position and income which, judged by Belgian standards at that time, were considerable.

In addition to the three secretaries, there existed a 'Conseil Supérieur du Congo,' composed of eighteen members and sitting at Brussels. This was supposed to act as an advisory council and it annually appointed the fourteen members of the Courts of Cassation and Appeal, which formed the supreme tribunals of the Independent State.

The higher Congolese officials whom I met were typical Belgians of the professional class, which is very much the same as that supplying in England the average Indian officer and civilian. However, there was one important difference between the raw material supplied by the two countries – that of education. Intellectually, the young Belgian who went out to the Colonies was probably fully as well equipped as the young Englishman, but he lacked the moral discipline imparted by the English public school system and at the same time the breadth of outlook belonging to the citizens of a big country. So far as I could judge, however, the higher officials were all humane and honourable men, and the oppressive character of the Congolese administration was probably due to the inherent evils of the system, rather than to any real defects in the qualities of its Belgian administrators.

On the other hand, one of the worst features of the Congo Government was the weakness of its lower personnel, the subordinate employés, non-commissioned officers and so forth, who were recruited from the lower middle and lower ranks of Belgian society. These men were without education, were badly paid,

and had no prospects, as they could only rise to a certain point and, once invalided home, were thrown back upon their own resources. They were thus peculiarly liable to the temptations of corruption by Europeans and rich natives, and of cruelty to poor natives who could not bribe. No European is so harsh or brutal to inferior races as the man of the artisan class, in whom their peculiarities, their institutions and their legends arouse no interest and indeed provoke only irritation and ignorant contempt. Men of this kind, invested with an authority demoralizing to themselves over helpless and stupid savages, and isolated from the society in which they have lived, in many cases take to drink, which in a trying, unhealthy climate ruins them far more quickly than in Europe. I believe that many of the crimes and deeds of violence perpetrated on the natives were committed under its influence. We are saved from this element by being able in our Central African dependencies to fill these subordinate posts with educated natives of India, whose health and character are not affected by the climate and who are more patient and less inclined than the low-class European to treat the African native with contemptuous brutality.

One of the most remarkable characteristics of King Leopold II was the way in which he came to view Belgian parties and statesmen from a purely Congolese standpoint. In this respect I heard him compared to our two first Hanoverian kings, who directed English affairs and favoured particular English statesmen with a constant eye on the internal politics of Germany and the interests of the Electorate in which they were absolute monarchs. 'The King,' I was told, 'prefers the Congo to Belgium, as much as your George I preferred Hanover to Great Britain.'

In order to understand Belgian institutions, it is necessary to give a brief sketch of the political situation obtaining after the separation from Holland in 1830. The Belgian Constitution of February, 1831, now modified in respect of the qualifications for the franchise and mode of voting, remains in force to-day, and is the oldest, with the exception of the Hungarian, and at the same time the most Liberal to be found on the Continent of Europe. Unlike most modern Constitutions, which begin by enumerating the prerogatives and obligations of the King, it opens with a solemn statement of the rights of the Belgian people. All Belgians are equal before the law; all enjoy individual freedom, and can only be arrested or punished by legal process; their domiciles are inviolable, their goods cannot be forfeited, their religious liberty can never be interfered with. The Press is free, and no censorship can ever be established; the right of meeting, of association, of petition are successfully asserted, and all authority is declared to emanate from the nation. No extension or limitation of the franchise, no change in the attitudes of the King, or of either Chamber, no restriction on the right of free speech, or of public meeting, can be effected save after a general election held *ad hoc* and a two-thirds majority in both the Houses returned as the result of such an election. It is obvious that these petitions afford an element of stability and security which other States might well regard with envy.

The prerogatives of the Sovereign are very limited; his signature carries no authority unless countersigned by a member of the Ministry; he can dissolve Parliament, but fresh elections must take place within forty days; he can prorogue it, but only for a month. Leopold I justly observed that it was obvious that no

Royal hand had had a share in drafting the Belgian Constitution, and it is therefore all the more remarkable that the three Kings of the House of Coburg should have established, notwithstanding all these legal restrictions, and with no traditional monarchical sentiment to fall back on, a personal authority which has enabled them to exercise a direct action on the politics of their country as great as that of many absolute Princes.

Although the Belgian people remain steadily loyal to the dynasty and Constitution, a movement began early in the 'sixties and gained fresh strength every year among the younger and more advanced school of Liberals, in favour of a democratic alteration of the electoral system. In March, 1848, a partial reform had been carried giving for a population of four and a half millions an electorate of eighty thousand, or about $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. This reform was felt to be insufficient by those Radical politicians who urged the right of the working classes to a share in the national representation, and bade them organize and agitate till they obtained it. No reform was, however, made, and in 1885 disturbances, due partly to discontent with a general reduction of wages and fomented by Socialist agitators, broke out in quick succession throughout the mining districts at Liège, Seraing and Charleroi, and were accompanied by riotous demonstrations at Brussels in favour of universal suffrage and a Republic and by the looting of shops, the burning of factories, and the wholesale destruction of property throughout the manufacturing region. These riots were suppressed by the Government with commendable firmness.

It was obvious that the Radical and Labour movements were too powerful, and were spreading too

rapidly, to be dealt with by repression alone. Accordingly in 1886 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the conditions of the working classes, while milder penalties were imposed upon those prisoners who had been found guilty of rebellion against the Government. In 1891 M. Beernaert, the Conservative Premier, introduced a democratic Reform Bill. This was at first rejected by the Chamber, but in 1893 M. Nyssens, a Conservative Deputy, described by Sir Edmund Monson as 'a lawyer who has never risen above mediocrity,' proposed a compromise which was carried by a large majority. This still remains the law of Belgium. By it the vote is given after a year's residence to every citizen twenty-five years old, and not disqualified by conviction of crime or the receipt of public charity. Every citizen over thirty-five years of age, and married, or a widower with legitimate issue, paying at least five francs a year in house tax, or owning real property worth 2,000 francs, or having derived for two years previously 100 francs a year from Belgian funds, became entitled to a supplementary vote. Two supplementary votes were bestowed on electors who had received a diploma of higher or secondary education, or who filled, or had previously filled, any appointment implying a superior education. No person could have more than three votes, or vote in more than one constituency, and the exercise of the franchise was rendered compulsory under penalty of a fine – a measure strongly urged by M. Beernaert, on the ground that the contented or Conservative was also too often the lazy elector, who would not take the trouble of voting.

At first sight it may seem strange that such a system of plural voting should have figured with the practical consent of all parties in a Reform Bill intended to

bring the Belgian Constitution into harmony with the democratic ideal. As a matter of fact, the scheme represented a fusion between the Clerical and Liberal conceptions of electoral reform, and its combination with universal suffrage a compromise between the moderate Catholics and advanced Liberals. All the moderate parties were agreed that the franchise must be lowered; all agreed in dreading the possible growth of Socialism, but the Conservatives wished merely to lower the property qualification so as to embrace the small peasant proprietors, a class naturally distrustful of Radicalism; whilst the Liberals were bent on making education and not property the basis of the extension of the suffrage, so as to enfranchise the lower professional and middle classes, petty Government officials, clerks, small shopkeepers or shop employés, earning, perhaps, not much more than artisans, but connected by education and aspirations with the Liberal bourgeoisie rather than the proletariat, as wearing black and not blouses, and despising purely manual labour. Property, more especially in land, was the watchword of the one party, an education above the common of the other, and the law establishing plural voting on the common basis of these two ideals was the middle term on which both eventually agreed. The Liberal party had indeed, in the time of M. Frère Orban, some twenty years before, actually created – and the thing deserves mention as an instructive illustration of its methods and spirit – an educational franchise for municipal elections, subjecting an elector before he could record his vote to an examination in natural and moral philosophy, political economy, and Belgian history, which has, I believe, no parallel among modern political experiments. He was required, before balloting for an alderman or parish councillor,

to answer in writing such questions as these: 'Describe the main provisions of the pacification of Ghent,' 'Define isotherm, equator, meridian,' and ' State your views as to the evidences for the existence of a First Cause,' and this absurd test was only abolished by the Clerical party, because the questions put to electors on the 'nature of the Deity' were regarded as inquiries of anti-Catholic tendency, inconsistent with the constitutional guarantees for religious freedom.

The reorganization of the Senate was next taken in hand. It was divided into two categories, one chosen by direct and the other by indirect election. Every Senator was to be at least thirty years of age, instead of, as previously, forty, and, in the case of those chosen by direct election, to be possessed of a property qualification similar to but lower than that hitherto prescribed – *i.e.* to pay 1,250 francs a year in direct taxes, or to derive 12,500 francs a year from real estate. Though elected by the democracy, the Senators were, as a body, to remain men of property, and in the case of the minority among them not requiring a property qualification, were to be chosen by indirect election.

M. Beernaert had succeeded in modifying the effects of universal suffrage by the plural and compulsory votes. He now endeavoured to induce Parliament to accept his two other proposed safeguards, the Royal *referendum* and the system of proportional representation. The former of these two measures, in spite of the King's sympathetic interest in it, was not carried, but the more important question was accepted by the Government at a later date, when M. Beernaert had been succeeded in the leadership of the Conservative party by Count de Smet de Naeyer.

The adoption of the system of proportional represen-

tation may be said to have closed for the time the period of constitutional agitation and reform which Belgium traversed from 1884 to 1899 and through which she was successfully piloted in its earlier stages by the ability of M. Beernaert and later by the general good sense of her people, and the capacity for compromise displayed by their political leaders.

During the period of my residence in Brussels the political situation was practically unchanged from the position of 1899. The Conservative party was still in power, and I made acquaintance with many of the leaders of it and of the other parties represented in the Chamber. M. Beernaert was possibly the most distinguished of the Belgian politicians, and in those days ranked as the first of existing Belgian statesmen. He had indeed a European and not merely a Belgian reputation. His dignified, if somewhat heavy and ungainly figure; his ability as an orator and debater; his language, always thoughtful, well-weighed, faultlessly literary, and rendered more impressive by a slow but clear delivery; his agreeable, often humorous, conversation; his great political experience, and his varied knowledge in many fields, would have combined to render him a striking and influential personality in any parliamentary society in Europe. In my time his position was one of isolation and he was unpopular with all the extreme parties. By the King also he was disliked on account of his opposition, notwithstanding the strong personal pressure brought to bear on him, to the Antwerp fortification scheme, and on account of his attitude on the question of the Congo, while he himself told me that he had found it very difficult as Prime Minister to work satisfactorily with his Sovereign.

The then head of the Catholic (or Conservative)

party, Count de Smet de Naeyer, belonged, like M. Beernaert, whose pupil he was, to its political, rather than to its clerical section. In his youth he was said to have been rather a reckless gambler; but he proved to be a first-rate Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his aptitudes were essentially financial. He was an indefatigable worker, an excellent man of business, and a good parliamentary tactician, but was in no way an impressive speaker or smart debater, while his apparent resolve to cling to office, notwithstanding repeated proofs that his majority was out of hand, had engendered a certain mistrust in his leadership. Socially he was not much seen; but his wife, an agreeable woman, was popular in Brussels society.

The ultra-Clerical party was supported and held together by M. Woeste, whose great parliamentary authority and influence had combined to render him in fact the power behind the throne. In himself he was an original and decidedly interesting personage. His family was really German and was said to be of Jewish origin. He was an able and successful barrister, and although nominally a mere private member of Parliament, he was really a greater personage than many a statesman of Cabinet rank. He was only once a Minister, and then only for a few months. Small, frail, with a sharp prominent nose, pinched features, and sandy whiskers turning white, he made up for any defects in presence by conspicuous ability as a parliamentary debater, though his eloquence was more aggressive and venomous than persuasive, and he seemed to delight in wounding rather than in convincing his antagonist. Throughout M. Beernaert's Ministry he was a thorn in that more moderate statesman's side, and the enmity between them had grown into a personal dislike. Alone among Belgian politicians

M. Woeste had defended British action in South Africa during the days of the Boer War. He was, in a few words, a good friend and a bitter hater, unpopular, frankly contemptuous of popularity, and a religious zealot without a tinge of insincerity or hypocrisy. On one occasion he spoke to me about the state of religion in England and asked a series of questions concerning a commission on Church discipline. I told him I believed that it was proposed to relax the use of the Athanasian Creed, as the clauses proclaiming the damnation of unbelievers were regarded as not in harmony with modern opinion. To this he made the characteristic reply that God's truth was independent of opinion, and was the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

The Liberal party was divided into a moderate and an advanced section, pretty sharply separated from one another. Their leading politician was unquestionably M. Paul Hymans. He seemed to me a very cultivated and agreeable man in private life, and was certainly one of the ablest – in my opinion the ablest – of the speakers and debaters in the Belgian Parliament. His Liberalism, tried by English standards, was of a very moderate type, but his fearless, though statesmanlike, attitude on the Congo question had given umbrage to the King, though it had increased his personal influence in his own party.

The avowed Republicanism of the Socialist leaders, and the offensive language of their Press concerning King Edward VII, made it impossible for a British Minister to have personal relations with them. I will merely observe that the so-called *parti ouvrier* was pervaded by two very different tendencies. An educated 'intellectual' minority of its supporters held the abstract doctrines of Karl Marx. But the majority of

its members were artisans and miners, who were less interested in the destruction of what Marx calls the Capitalist vampire than in such a readjustment of economic conditions as would improve the material lot of their class without necessarily reorganizing society. They voted for the Labour party on class grounds, because they regarded it as the party of the proletariat, as the Catholic was that of the priests and landlords, and the Liberal that of the professional and industrial bourgeoisie. Their leaders, who were all Collectivists, were wise enough to refuse to make the acceptance of the Marxist doctrine a condition of membership of the party organization. Their leading spokesman was M. Emile Vandervelde, a man of considerable private means, and a very effective speaker.

The Court played a relatively small part in the social life of the Belgian capital. The King, after the State ball given in January, hurried off for the rest of the winter to the Riviera and only returned at the close of the season for the annual garden party at Laeken. The Countess of Flanders had lived in complete retirement since her widowhood, and, although Prince and Princess Albert gave occasional dances, the dimensions of their residence, a handsome house rented by them from the d'Assche family, but hardly a palace, made it difficult for them to entertain on a royal scale.

Prince Albert, then thirty-two years of age, was inclined to be shy and reserved. It was only since his father's death a year before, that he had occupied a really prominent position. On the occasions on which I had the honour of conversing with him, he impressed me as a man of wide reading and varied as well as serious interests. A person intimate with the Royal

family told me that Princess Clémentine had once remarked that their talents developed rather late and slowly, and that she had always heard that this had been the case with King Leopold II himself.

Although I believe that Princes sometimes 'get up' foreign countries beforehand in order to please or impress their representatives (the German Emperor once quite frightened the late Shah by his minute knowledge of Persian history) there can be no doubt that one of my South American colleagues was greatly struck by Prince Albert's knowledge of South America. The Prince was exceedingly simple in his tastes, and I imagine is rather indifferent to the pleasures of society – I noticed that he never once danced either at the Court balls or at those given at his own house – and was much attached to his wife. His political views he, of course, kept carefully to himself, but it was whispered that they were very different from those of King Leopold, who was said rather to depreciate his abilities and certainly kept him in the background.

The large number of persons who made money directly or indirectly out of the Congo felt that they owed their prosperity to the King, and it is certain that the commercial and industrial expansion of Belgium was in no small measure promoted by the success of the African enterprise. Agriculturists and manufacturers in Belgium, by sending their products to the Congo, were led to try supplying other distant markets, of which they had not previously dreamt, and marked stimulus was thus given, and new horizons opened up, to the commerce of the Belgian people. Nor must it be forgotten that the sums drawn by the King from what Mr. Morel called 'red rubber' were largely spent in improving and beautifying Brussels and Ostend. They thus afforded continuous employment to thou-

sands of Belgian workpeople who, with no special affection for the dynasty as such, had good reason to feel grateful to King Leopold.

The efforts of the Socialists to discredit the King with the multitude by declaiming against his immorality and his harshness to his children fell very flat. I once noticed at a Brussels railway station a number of persons hawking a pamphlet embodying the articles in the *Peuple* on the alleged history of the King's intimacy with the Baroness Vaughan. The sellers were crying round the rapidly filling tramcars, crowded with people of all classes, 'Les amours du vieux Léopold, trente centimes. Achetez les dernières galanteries du roi, trente centimes.' I stood for a few minutes to watch the effect on the public. Its attitude was one of complete indifference. One or two passers-by bought the leaflet with a smile, but the majority took no notice and made no comment whatever. The insult to the Sovereign and the obscene character of the Socialist publication failed to arouse indignation or even curiosity. . . .

The general tendency of the ultra-Radical artisan, who had no religious convictions, and had been taught by Socialism to reject the old conceptions of marriage and morality, was to shrug his shoulders and say of the King, 'Il a bien le droit de s'amuser comme un autre. A sa place je ferais autant.'

Personally the King was as popular with the extreme Radicals as any crowned head could be, as he was known to have favoured the democratic revision of the Constitution, whilst the personal courage which he displayed during the Socialist riots earned for him a good deal of general respect.

The only section of his subjects who were, I think, especially shocked by his moral delinquencies was a

section of the Catholic party, who represented the devout and pious middle class, and in whom what we should call the Puritanical spirit was very strong. This element was to some extent represented by the *Patriote*, a newspaper expressing the ideas of the Young Right, and by the *Bien Public*, the organ of the Bishop of Ghent and the Clerical party in Flanders. Its influence was once sufficient to provoke a respectful remonstrance to the King, by the Dean and Chapter of Ostend, in the course of a complimentary visit which they paid to him. The story of this remonstrance is somewhat comic. It is said that the Chapter, having been ushered into the presence, and the usual compliments having been exchanged and exhausted, the Dean shyly blurted out that certain statements made respecting His Majesty's private life had caused pain and scandal to pious souls. Upon this the King turned a piercing blue eye on him, and asked if he himself believed these statements, and if so, what steps he had taken to verify them. The Dean, a timid man, lost his head and could only stammer, 'Mais non, Sire, seulement l'on prétend, l'on raconte, il a été avéré.' 'L'on prétend, l'on raconte,' interrupted His Majesty. 'Eh bien, M. le Doyen, on est venu me raconter l'autre jour une histoire du même genre sur *votre* compte, on me parlait d'une liaison . . . Calmez-vous, M. le Doyen,' continued the King, as the blushing Dean, amidst the shocked looks of the Chapter, poured forth agitated and quite sincere protestations of innocence, 'je n'ai point ajouté foi à cette histoire. Vous voyez, messieurs, que j'ai plus de charité chrétienne que vous.' The discomfited Chapter hurriedly fluttered backward out of the presence, whilst the King continued to harass their retreat by Parthian shots from Holy Writ about the tongue being a dangerous member, 'charity

thinking no evil,' and so on, nor did any Belgian divine again attempt to play the part of Nathan to such a David. I was, however, assured that the Royal chaplains did not deem themselves justified in administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to the King, and that in order not to draw attention to this circumstance the latter in consequence avoided being in Belgium for Easter week, when every practising Catholic is required to confess and communicate.

The great political authority enjoyed by the King was in part the result of his genuine abilities, of the fear inspired by his resolute and vindictive spirit, and of the respect felt for his wide knowledge and long experience, and in part to the fact that nearly all the party leaders from whose ranks any Ministry must be formed were younger men, fully conscious of their inferiority in capacity and strength of character to their Sovereign. Among the occupants of the front benches, whether Catholic or Liberal, there were few politicians who would not recoil from the prospect of a political or intellectual duel with so expert a swordsman as the King. As one of them himself put it to me, 'Ils subissent tous l'ascendant de cet esprit supérieur, contre lequel ils se sent impuissants à lutter.'

Thus it was that the King constantly intervened actively and publicly in party controversies, that in questions like that of party reform, of the defences of Antwerp and the Congo, he did not hesitate to bring pressure to bear upon members of Parliament by utterances, by private interviews, and by personal solicitations, and, without consulting ministers, to express his own opinions in the form of vigorously worded declarations and harangues. Now and then, as when during the Reform crisis of 1890 he discussed their demands with deputations of Radical workmen,

he concealed himself behind his constitutional obligations. On the whole, however, it was clear that his experience of autocratic rule in the Congo had led him to find constitutional restraints irksome, and that his keen attachment to his African absolutism sprang not so much from the love of wealth, although that was very strong in him, as from his delight in being able to execute public works on a vast scale without having to obtain funds from Parliament. It was this which made him cling with such tenacity to the sovereignty acquired by him after such long and laborious efforts.

Every young Belgian who aimed at making a good official career knew that if he championed the Congo he might be noted by the King as a person to be helped and promoted, but that if he were known to be indifferent or hostile to the 'œuvre civilisatrice' a black mark would be put against his name by a Sovereign who rarely forgave, and whose influence might be employed either to make or mar him.

It would be unjust to suppose that his motive was to amass wealth or to use it for the prosecution in Belgium of ends unconnected with the development of his colony, still less that he deliberately contemplated the creation of the oppressive system afterwards condemned by the conscience of the civilized world. His recourse to such men as Stanley and Gordon as his first pioneers in the Congo was conclusive evidence on this point. 'Nemo repente fuit turpissimus,' but the task upon which he entered, though he did not realize it at the time, was beyond his strength if he was to keep in with the spirit of the pledges given by him to Europe. Powerful Governments such as France, Germany, and England could subjugate and rule vast regions in tropical Africa, inhabited by warlike barbarians with no needs, no stimulus to labour, and no taxable re-

sources, and placed at the same time under the Free Trade disabilities of the Berlin Act, by means of annual grants-in-aid, during the initial period of which their receipts did not balance their necessary expenditure. Chartered companies like the Imperial British East Africa and the Deutsch-Ost-Afrika were bound, as the event showed, to fail in this attempt, and the personal position of the King, with no grant-in-aid from Belgium to rely on, was not unlike that of these companies. Hence he fell back on the conception, common to all the Powers having African dependencies, of all the actually unoccupied land being the property of the State – *i.e.*, his own. . . . The first results of the application of this principle were lucrative, and whetted the King's natural desire for wealth, which he gradually extended, with consequences which were afterwards notorious, till monopoly based on forced labour became, in defiance of the whole spirit in which it had been founded, the distinctive characteristic of his State.

I have already alluded to the King's vindictiveness and determination. Almost every man of importance who served under him in his capacity as absolute ruler felt the former, nor was past work, however good and faithful, any security against the harshest treatment, should an official, in the exercise of his duty to his master, express disagreement with the latter's opinion or tender unpalatable advice. An instance of this was afforded by the experience of M. Van Eetvelde; but M. Wauters, who was for years in the Congo service and left it owing to a disagreement with the King, told me that such was the latter's resentment that, at an exhibition, of which he was one of the presidents, His Majesty publicly slighted him by declining even to acknowledge his bow. Princess Clémentine sent him an apology next day through his brother, a Court painter,

for the discourtesy with which, much against her will, her father's orders had compelled her to treat him. These actions were of a piece with the painful scene witnessed when Princess Stéphanie came to Belgium at the time of the Queen's death. They indicated in the King a despotic and relentless temper which was not without its political uses, in so far as it made men think twice before they opposed him. A characteristic instance of his persistency was supplied by my American colleague, Mr. Wilson. When the late Mr. Secretary Hay passed through Brussels, on his way to Wiesbaden, the King was very anxious to see him. Mr. Hay, who was under medical treatment, excused himself on that ground from accepting the repeated invitations to lunch and dinner with which His Majesty had honoured him, and when urged to call at the palace on his way back from Germany he intimated very plainly to Mr. Wilson that his doctor insisted on his being kept absolutely quiet. 'Well, Mr. Minister,' said the King to Mr. Wilson after a last unsuccessful effort, 'if Mr. Hay will not come and see me, it is clear that I must go to Mr. Hay, for see him I will.'

He thereupon took the train to Wiesbaden, entered Mr. Hay's apartment unannounced, and conversed with him for nearly two hours about the attitude of the United States Government towards Belgian enterprise in China. . . . I asked my American colleague what Mr. Hay had said to this surprise visit. 'Well,' replied Mr. Wilson dryly, 'so far as I knew he said nothing; he just went home and DIED. But the King, you see, would take no denial, and if he wants to do a thing, he has to get his way.'

A final trait in the King's character was his instinctive admiration for successful business men. A mil-

lionaire (I do not, of course, refer to such a man as Cecil Rhodes, who was a statesman as well as a money-maker) appealed to him more powerfully than a great literary or political genius. He paid the first visit to Mr. Pierpont Morgan; he ennobled M. Empain, a wealthy speculator whose merit was his fortune; he sent for any capitalist, of whatever nationality, passing through Brussels, who had, as Americans say, 'made his pile,' and he was as incapable of gazing *oculo irretorto* on vast heaps of gold, as on a pretty and well-dressed female figure. This weakness was, perhaps, a secret of the sympathy inspired by him in the Belgian middle classes, the true descendants of those opulent bankers who, in the Middle Ages, made Antwerp, Bruges, and Ghent the great clearing-houses and marts of Western Europe.

The King's relations with the foreign representatives, through whom he tried to work on American opinion in Congo interests, were very slight. He gave a State dinner in honour of every new envoy, and said something polite and usually apposite – for he was a charming and witty conversationalist – to each head of a foreign mission at the annual levée, the State balls and the Laeken garden party. Owing to our difficulties with the Congo Government I had several political talks with him, and always found him most courteous and friendly, whilst firm in maintaining his own standpoint. But since the Queen's death he lived more and more in isolation with his 'left-handed' family at Laeken or in the South of France, and he never honoured a foreign envoy or a subject with his presence at dinner.

Yet he was undoubtedly popular with all classes of his subjects – even including the Socialists. In this connection I heard that a leader of that party – a

doctor by profession – once tried to flatter him by saying that if Belgium ever became a republic the King would be chosen as first President. King Leopold was very angry at this. 'Monsieur le docteur,' he replied, 'je pense que vous seriez flatté, si quelqu'un disait devant vous que vous feriez un excellent vétérinaire!'

Even in 1907 I think there can be very little doubt that the majority of the Belgian nation foresaw the coming war. Certainly the bulk of the country was in sympathy with the action of the King in pressing forward the conscription law by every means in his power, although there was a strong opposition to the measure in the Belgian Chamber, especially from the extreme Clericals. The law provided for the compulsory military service of one member of every family in the country. It was particularly noteworthy that the German Legation took the keenest interest in the debates in the Parliament and appointed a special representative to attend every one of them.

King Leopold died in 1907 at Laeken. His was indeed an heroic death, for although suffering acute agony he would hardly admit that he felt pain. Before it took place he sent for the Prime Minister, M. Schollaert, and insisted very strongly upon the passing of the conscription law. 'Monsieur le Ministre,' I was told that he said on one occasion, 'j'attache la plus haute importance à l'adoption immédiate du projet de loi militaire. Retournez à la Chambre et dîtes de la tribune que c'est votre Souverain agonisant qui vous le demande. Il ne peut pas mourir tranquil jusqu'à ce que cette loi ait été adoptée.' The law was eventually passed a few hours before the King expired, after he had made a legal wife of his mistress, and thus legitimized his children.

Beyond the immediate circle of the Court, the heads of Brussels society were the great families who constituted what was termed the *Salon Bleu*, so called from the room in the palace in which, with the Ministers of State and the foreign representatives, they awaited the arrival of the King at Court balls, before joining in the royal procession to the ball-room. These great families were the ducal houses of Arenberg, Croy and d'Ursel with those of the Princes de Ligne and the Counts de Mérode. But the first of these was really more German than Belgian, for, besides palaces at Brussels and Héverlé, near Louvain, it owned large estates in Westphalia and its head, the Duke of Arenberg, was an officer in the Prussian Cuirassiers.

The Belgian *noblesse* was old-fashioned in its habits. Although the Code Napoléon prevented the accumulation of great wealth in the hands of its members, it showed less inclination than the aristocracies of other countries to enrich itself by matrimonial alliances with the middle classes. Its families continued to intermarry mainly among themselves, with the result that they were all more or less related to one another. An extreme illustration of this feeling was afforded by the late Duchess of Arenberg. When asked as a favour by the King not to exclude from a ball which she was giving the Brussels representative of the House of Rothschild and his wife (a sister of Lady Sassoon), whom the great families had hitherto refused to admit, because of their being Jews, to their receptions, the Duchess replied that His Majesty's wish was a command, and that his protégés should not be excluded; but, in order to keep her word to the letter, she abandoned her ball altogether, on some frivolous pretext, and her action was generally approved by her order as a rebuke to the King's worship of wealth. This unbending attitude

was confined to the *Salon Bleu* families, and the mass of the nobility exchanged hospitalities freely with the members of the *haute finance*, although intermarriage between the two classes was more exceptional than common.

The Belgian *noblesse* must be pronounced an eminently respectable class. It possessed in a high degree those domestic virtues which the French term *bourgeoises*; it was religious and moral – at least outwardly; and the appearance of its members in the police court, public conjugal infidelities, gambling scandals, and the like, in high places, seemed to be a good deal rarer at Brussels than in the fashionable worlds of other capitals. But it was emphatically a *noblesse*, and not an aristocracy. It had lost all real control over the administration of the country, its more active members were fairly numerous in the Senate and in diplomacy, but were not often found in the other services . . . in the army, in the House of Representatives, or in the Cabinets, which were mainly recruited from the latter Assembly.

CHAPTER VII

PORTUGAL

I HAD been very anxious, ever since I had left the Middle East, to take advantage of the interest which I had acquired in Tropical Africa to visit the Congo Free State on a special mission, all the more so that the critics of King Leopold's administration rather recalled our old Anti-Slavery friends, more especially after it had aroused the hostility of Mr. Morel, Sir Roger Casement, and other champions of aboriginal races. The Foreign Office were not in sympathy with this project; it perhaps reminded them of my controversies with the Aborigines Protection Society and other similar enthusiasts; but now that King Leopold was dead, the attacks on his African rule had ceased in some degree to appeal to their philanthropic authors. It was intimated to me that if I were willing to go to Lisbon I might find a new and interesting field there.

My old friend the Marquis de Soveral approved of this transfer to his own native country, but I found that the positions which both he and I were likely to occupy were less favourable than that which I remembered, when Sir Robert Morier was my host there in the days of my own youth. The Legation, a comfortable house with a picturesque garden and a fine view of the Tagus, atoned by its other advantages for the somewhat squalid character of some of the adjacent streets, but the beauty of the capital of the Tagus and the fine Black Horse Square at once won my admiration, and during the two years that I spent there I travelled all over the ancient Lusitanian kingdom. Our staff, though it varied a good deal during my residence, was efficient and as happy as obliging. One of

its youngest members, Mervyn Herbert, who had at a somewhat early date seen some noisy political disturbances in the street, insisted on my going with him to the scene, whence shots were apparently being fired. When we got into the centre of the city the noise was more deafening; but no streets ran with blood: for on asking if a riot was in progress, we were assured that these explosions were harmless sputters in honour of St. Antony, the Portuguese saint, deeply loved for his cleverness in restoring stolen goods. My poor secretary was dreadfully disappointed at the lack of bloodshed, but doubtless hoped for better arrangements when the next revolution should break out.

On my arrival at Lisbon I was met by Dr. Vasconcellos, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and a former doctor to the Queen, a cultivated and agreeable man. A few days later I paid my official visit to the President of the Portuguese Republic, Senhor Arriaga, and presented him with my official credentials. He was a dignified, elderly man, a convinced believer in the Republic as the most suitable form of government for his country. He was, I need scarcely say, a Freethinker and hostile to the Roman Catholic Church and to all Christian views of religion; but he struck me as a well-meaning, honourable man, and an honest servant of his country's interest. Dr. Vasconcellos, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, held his Chief's views with little difference, and although his political outlook and opinions were not generally speaking in harmony with mine, our relations were usually friendly. I had at first some little differences with him, owing to the interference with the religious schools and other institutions in Lisbon, and he displayed a certain pettiness on secondary questions, attempts, for example, to prevent English Catholic seminarists reading for the Church

from wearing out of doors their priestly gowns and the conventual habits of nuns. But in this matter I carried the day in the name of religious freedom. There was indeed something comic in the insistence of the secular authorities in compelling the nuns to wear ill-fitting wigs instead of the ecclesiastical head-covering, which provoked unseemly giggles among the novices as well as the mother superiors.

One of my principal duties was to endeavour to secure the restitution to King Manoel of what might be regarded as the personal property of the Portuguese royal family. On his flight from Portugal, it was, of course, impossible to rescue many of the jewels and valuable paintings which adorned the royal palaces. It was felt that the Republican Government ought to be prepared to make restitution to the young King, and my duty forced me to enter into a lengthy and tortuous negotiation to secure the object in view. After nearly two years, success attended my efforts, and I was also instrumental in recovering for King Manoel the possession of the royal cork forests in Alemtejo – a valuable monopoly of the Crown.

An amusing incident attended the dispatch to England of a large wooden crate addressed to King Manoel. The Portuguese Customs authorities were anxious to prevent the export of any articles not appearing upon the schedules, and their suspicions having been aroused by some defect in the declaration forms, they burst open the crate with some difficulty, only to discover that it contained a life-size bust of Senhor Affonso Costa, one of the most extreme leaders of the Red party. The Portuguese politician was making a present of his likeness to some admirers in London, and how the crate came to be addressed to King Manoel is, so far as I am concerned, a mystery as yet unexplained.

I remember, while I was at Lisbon, taking up at the club there an English magazine, which contained an article on the subject of the prophecy of an ancient anchorite or priest, who had foretold a series of events affecting the House of Hohenzollern. The last verse of the prophecy applied to the Emperor William II, but the author had made a slip, for, if I remember rightly, the verse contained the words, 'Tandem sceptra gerit qui stemmatis ultimus erit,' or in other terms foretold the final overthrow of the once powerful Imperial House of Hohenzollern.

The last time I saw the Emperor William since I first met him as a boy at Oxford, was many years later on an occasion when he visited Brussels, accompanied by the Crown Prince of Germany, as well as by a beautiful daughter, who afterwards became the wife of the legitimate heir of the German Hanoverian House. I have a vivid recollection of this second interview. Herr von Flotow, an official of the Prussian Court, had mistaken me for my cousin, Charles Hardinge, and I had to rectify this mistake. It so happened that one of the objects dear to the Kaiser was his desire for a further successful visit to the most important countries of the world. When the Emperor talked to me about my own visit to India with the Russian Cesarevitch, I promised him the finest big-game shooting in Asia. 'That,' said the Emperor, 'is a secondary matter. I want my son not so much to shoot big game as to study the methods by which a great nation creates and maintains its power. Perhaps when he has seen more of the world he will value his father's advice rather more than he does at present.'

I need not dwell at length on the German Crown Prince's visit to India, but I could not help being amused at hearing of an incident of his reception at

Calcutta. It appears that while the heir to the German throne was sitting on an open veranda with his Anglo-Indian hosts and hostesses, one of the latter, probably Lady Hardinge, called the Crown Prince's attention to a star of exceptional brilliance and asked what it really was. The Crown Prince was quite equal to the occasion. 'I think,' he said, 'that it must be a new decoration conferred by my august father on his special friend and ally the Almighty.'

In the course of my interview with the German Emperor, the conversation turned on the overthrow of King Manoel, of whom he spoke with unmerited severity. I did my best to take up the cudgels on the young King's behalf, pointing out that he was a mere boy who had seen his father killed and his brother mortally wounded by revolutionary assassins; that he had not been educated with a view to immediate succession to the throne; and that he was completely ignorant of what persons in the army and in politics could be trusted. The Kaiser, however, with much assurance persisted in maintaining his point of view, little anticipating, no doubt, that he himself would be compelled to imitate the young Portuguese King's example under circumstances at least equally tragic for his dynasty and his country. I should perhaps mention that while at Lisbon I took the opportunity of visiting the royal tombs in which the embalmed bodies of King Manoel's father and brother still reposed, side by side with that of Dom Pedro, the late Emperor of Brazil.

In this connection it would take too long to describe the events which brought about the Republican revolution in Portugal in the year 1910, as the chief result of the assassination of King Carlos and Dom Luis, and the narrow escape from a similar fate of his heir, King Manoel, a young Prince of amiable

manners and a patriotic lover of his country. In some quarters the blame for this cause of the revolution was ascribed to the indifference which it seemed to evoke in England, the ancient ally of the Royal House, in spite of the fact that the Royalist party numbered Mr. Winston Churchill among its supporters. The Spanish Minister, the Count of Villalobar, is said to have urged the King strongly to go to Oporto, which had always been loyal. I have heard it said that the King was prepared to take the Spanish Minister's advice, and had already embarked for that purpose at Ericeira, a small port to the north of the estuary of the Tagus, but that a traitorous officer persuaded the royal family that they had not enough coal and must go to procure it at Gibraltar. This meant a flight from Portugal, and thus an *ipso facto* abdication, and it was hailed as such by the enemies of the dynasty. I believe the young King was brave and patriotic, but he allowed himself to be guided at the crisis of his life by those to whom he ought never to have listened.

At Gibraltar the King found himself met, not merely by the Governor of the fortress, but also by Count Bonin-Longare, the Italian Minister at Madrid, and the Portuguese Queen-Mother, Maria Pia. This royal lady was pious and generous to a fault, for she gave gold and silver pieces to beggars right and left; but she had never recovered from the effects of her son's death: so much so that her mind seems to have been for a time affected by the shock which she had then sustained. The Governor of Gibraltar had allotted a chapel in the old 'Convent' which he and his predecessors had long used as an Anglican chapel, and he proposed that the Portuguese visitors should attend the Latin Mass there; but on this the Queen-Mother was unyielding. She distributed, I believe, numerous

largesses in coins to the beggars who besieged her; but she would not attend the service which, the Governor thought, might console her. She was said to have replied to his suggestion that she felt no longer much comfort in these religious rites, and could think of nothing but the tragic death of her son. The King of Portugal and his staff attended, as was only seemly, the religious ceremonies, at which all the other Roman Catholic representatives were present. It was obvious that the presence of the ex-King of Portugal at Gibraltar, so close to his original kingdom, might easily be interpreted as menacing the stability of the new Portuguese Government, which the triumphant Republican party was now preparing to invest with a permanent constitutional authority.

Meanwhile, the first step towards the establishment of a new Constitution was the election of a Constituent Assembly. The elections for this purpose, which had been repeatedly deferred, took place at the end of May. Any anticipations which might have been entertained that they would be marked by scenes of disturbance proved entirely unfounded, and in nearly every constituency the list made out by the local Republican directory was adopted without a contest. It is probable that if the elections for the Constituent Assembly had been really free, certain districts in the north of Portugal, in which the Republican legislation against religion was resented, would have returned avowed Royalists; but the fear of the *carbonarios*, and the complete disorganization of the old monarchical parties ever since the proclamation of the Republic, was too great. In most provincial districts only a small number of electors, other than those in the employ of the Government, actually voted, and in some I believe there was no voting at all.

The Constituent Assembly met on June 22, under the presidency of Senhor Anselmo Braamcamp, 176 deputies, most of them of no political experience or local influence, being present. It proceeded to declare the monarchy abolished, the House of Braganza banished, and the form of government of Portugal to be a democratic Republic, and to establish a new national flag and anthem. It next confirmed the Provisional Government and gave legal validity to the numerous 'decrees' which had been issued by it.

On July 2, the draft of the new Republican Constitution was laid before the General Assembly. It established a parliamentary as distinct from a plebiscitary Republic, that is to say, a Government in which the executive power is vested, not as in the United States, in a chief magistrate directly chosen by the people, but as in France, in a Ministry selected by the President from the members of the parliamentary majority for the time being. This was probably a wise selection in a country circumstanced as is Portugal. It further provided (*a*) for a bi-cameral system, the lower Chamber to be elected for three years by direct universal suffrage, and the higher or 'Municipal Council' for six, in the first instance by the Constituent Assembly and afterwards by the municipal bodies; (*b*) for the reorganization of the judiciary; and (*c*) for the protection of individual rights and liberty by what are known in all Continental charters as 'constitutional guarantees.' Ministers were not to sit or take part in debate in either of the two Chambers above described or the so-called 'Congresso,' which was to supersede the ancient Cortes.

At the beginning of August the extreme democratic party organized a riotous protest in the streets against the 'undemocratic' proposal to establish a President

and Second Chamber. The Constituent Assembly, however, insisted on maintaining the presidential and bi-cameral systems, and merely substituted the terms 'Chamber of Deputies' and 'Senate' for the terms National and Municipal Council of the draft Constitution, with the further provision that the first senators, to the number of seventy-one, should be elected by the Assembly itself from its own midst, and that its remaining members should form the Chamber of Deputies. At the same time it greatly circumscribed the power of the President, giving him much less initiative or right of intervention than is possessed in limited monarchies by the King. It rendered him liable to impeachment for his public acts before a specially constituted High Court. He had no military authority and no right of dissolution. He held office for four years, but could not be re-elected for two consecutive terms. His salary was just under £5,000 a year, but he was not allowed to reside, like the President of the French Republic, in any of the ancient royal palaces. The ministers were given the right of speaking and initiating legislation in both Chambers, but, except in the case of members of the original Provisional Government, they were not eligible for the Presidency. The Constitution itself was rendered subject to revision every ten years, and might even, if this should be found necessary, be revised after five.

Thus amended, the Constitution was solemnly read out in the Assembly on August 21, and proclaimed to be the fundamental law of the Portuguese Republic, and on August 24 the first President of the Republic was elected. The choice of the Assembly fell on Dr. Manuel José d'Arriaga, then just over seventy years of age. He had had a distinguished career as a lawyer and had always taken a prominent part in politics. He

had also been for many years professor of English at the Lisbon Lyceum and previously at the famous University of Coimbra, and was the author of a number of literary works both in prose and poetry. When Dr. Arriaga was made rector of the University of Coimbra he is said to have declared that in Portugal there was not room for both science and the Almighty, and that he preferred the elimination of the latter. He was of aristocratic parentage, and it was said that he even had royal blood in his veins. His appearance was distinguished and dignified, but it gave no impression of strength of character. In politics he belonged to the moderate meditative type of democrat.

On the day of the election of President Arriaga the Assembly elected from its own midst seventy-one senators and 140 members of the Chamber of Deputies. Ten days later the first Constitutional Ministry of the new Republic was appointed by the President from the ranks of the majority in the Assembly, Senhor Joao Chagas being entrusted with the offices of Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior.

The Great Powers in Europe were averse to any hasty recognition of the republic, and soon after the promulgation of the Law of Separation a very long controversy arose as to its effect on the British religious and educational institutions in the country, to which I have already indirectly alluded. Eventually, however, the Portuguese Government promised that the Law of Separation should not be applied to these institutions, and formal recognition of the Republic immediately followed. Very similar steps were taken on behalf of their respective religious institutions by the French, German and Italian Legations, who in this matter acted in complete harmony with our own Government and obtained identical results.

In October of the same year Captain Paiva Couceiro, an officer who had distinguished himself by zeal and bravery in Africa and by loyalty during the revolution, headed a raid (for it was little more than this) into Northern Portugal. The organization of the affair was very badly managed, and, in spite of the presence in the ranks of the invaders of the two sons of Dom Miguel, little popular interest was taken in this Royalist attempt. The Government acted with commendable promptness and suppressed the rising a few days after Couceiro had entered Portugal. It was on this occasion that the Royalist password, 'Beatrice has been married,' was altered by the Radicals to 'Beatrice has died.' (The identity of Beatrice is obscure, but probably the lady's name was adopted by the Royalists for this very reason.) A large number of arrests were made of persons who were suspected of having joined or abetted the Royalist rising, and very heavy sentences were passed upon many quite humble persons who had been arrested on frivolous charges. Protests against the action of the Government in this matter were made, and in certain respects the lot of the political prisoners was ameliorated in the course of the ensuing months.

At the time of his appointment to the office of Prime Minister, Senhor Chagas was Portuguese Envoy at Paris. A journalist by profession, he had taken an active part in the Republican movement, and had even been in prison and transported to Africa under the monarchy. His private life was described to me as not marked by a high moral standard, but he struck me during the short period of my official intercourse with him as a man of ability, energy, and breadth of view.

The Secretary for Foreign Affairs was still, as

already stated, Dr. Augusto de Vasconcellos, who had hitherto been chiefly known as a successful and popular surgeon. It was said by his enemies that his republicanism was due to the disappointment of his hopes at not having been made a Court physician, and that until he became a Minister his wife, a lady of good social position, was strongly opposed to the Republic.

He was a man of about forty, of agreeable and conciliatory manners, who posed as an independent and very moderate Republican. I found a similar successor in Senhor Maceira, who was, however, of rather more pronounced Radical tendencies. I had no acute differences with him, except on the religious question and on the King's claims to the old royal domains.

The new Ministry met Parliament for the first time on September 4. The programme announced by the Premier was of a somewhat negative character. He would, he said, continue the work of the Provisional Government more especially in the direction of anti-clericalism, and would endeavour to maintain the union of the Republican party and the traditional foreign policy of Portugal based on the alliance with Great Britain. The majority of the political leaders of the various parties expressed their adherence to this programme; but Dr. Affonso Costa, the principal representative of the so-called 'democratic' party and a man of considerable vigour and fearlessness, representing extreme Radical views, intimated his dissatisfaction with it as inadequate. It soon became evident that he meant to figure as the leader of a Radical opposition to a majority formed by a coalition of more moderate Republican groups, each owning allegiance to a personal leader. The modification of the Separation Law, of which Senhor Chagas was in favour,

while Senhor Costa regarded it with the pride and affection of an author, threatened to form a battle-ground between them.

This is perhaps the moment at which I should say something about this famous law, enacted on April 11, 1911, by the Provisional Government, and described by Sir Francis Villiers as 'an arbitrary and inquisitorial measure, whose general provisions are wholly incompatible with its opening declarations in regard to freedom of religion and liberty of conscience.'

No reasonable objection could have been taken to the disestablishment by the Republican party of the Church of Portugal, or to the abolition of tithes and all payments of salaries by the State to ecclesiastical persons or corporations, with equitable compensation, during their lives, to holders of actual vested interests. This had always been an avowed feature of its programme, and it could not have been expected to abandon it when its political ambition was realized.

Instead, however, of liberating the Church from State control, and treating it like any other voluntary association of Portuguese citizens, the Provisional Government proceeded by this law to subject it to a slavery to the civil power which was evidently intended to cripple it as a religious agency, and was consistent with the principles of Roman Catholicism, and with the dependence of its bishops and clergy on the Papacy.

The law prevented, for example, any of its members from voluntarily contributing to its maintenance otherwise than through so-called 'Church institutions' created by it in each parish, subject both to the Ministry of Justice and to the parish council, to which the priest was not permitted to belong, and which was intended to administer, at least in their temporal aspect, its entire ecclesiastical affairs. These institu-

tions might receive no gifts or bequests from pious or charitable persons, such bequests being forfeited to the legal heir, or, failing claim by him, to the parish or communal council; and a third of all the subscriptions which they were permitted to collect as voluntary offerings during divine service, or for pew rents, funerals, etc., were to be devoted to some secular charitable purpose. All churches and other religious buildings were to be inalienable except with the consent of the State, which had, however, the right to appropriate them for public purposes, and to which they were in all cases to revert without compensation at the end of ninety-nine years. Public worship was henceforth only to be performed between sunrise and sunset (thus prohibiting all evening services in winter). All cathedrals and parish churches and all revenues from funds hitherto assigned to the Church were declared to be the property of the State, those of them which had been used by the Jesuits being, however, at once assigned to some secular purpose of public utility. Masses or religious observances for the dead were only to be celebrated (under a penalty) in virtue of a written will or a document attested by the heirs of the deceased, and then only by Portuguese citizens ordained in Portugal, who had graduated in Portuguese State universities or colleges. All fees in respect of them or other customary payments or contributions to the clergy were rendered irrecoverable at law, and no religious bequests exceeding one-eighteenth of the testator's estate were henceforth to be recognized as valid. No bulls or pastoral letters, either from Rome or any native bishops, were to be published in any church without previous reference to the Minister of Justice for his approval of them. Theological instruction was prohibited in existing episcopal or other

seminaries, but might be imparted in State schools, and all clerical persons or ecclesiastical students were forbidden to wear gowns or other church habits outside consecrated buildings. No religious service or meetings for religious purposes (which included instruction) might be held in private houses or buildings, or outside the churches specially authorized for the purpose, at which more than twenty persons were present. Ministers of religion who exercised their functions in cathedrals or parish churches under State control at the time of the proclamation of the Republic, and had not been guilty of any acts 'contrary to the State or social interests' (a wide term), were at the same time entitled to pensions or annuities for life, to be fixed in relation to their age, position, and the value of their previous emoluments, and a half or quarter of such annuities were assigned in the event of a priest's death to parents, widow, and legitimate or illegitimate children. The suspension of a priest for marriage was not to affect his right to a clerical pension.

I ought to explain here that marriage among the lower grades of the clergy in Portugal had been far from uncommon for a considerable time. In practically all the small villages the local priest had a family and supported a more or less unofficial wife. Even among the more important of the higher grades one occasionally met a 'married' priest. The Roman Church had, however, granted no special dispensation to the Portuguese clergy, and officially it did all that lay in its power to discourage the priests' disregard of its rule of celibacy. The recognition of the existing state of affairs by the Law of Separation was, therefore, in direct opposition to the law of the Church, and this gave rise to many strong protests on the part of the higher dignitaries.

The Law of Separation also suppressed the publication by the priests of their local news bulletins in the papers. It had been a common practice, both in Portugal and in Southern Spain, that the rural clergy should issue a weekly résumé of clerical and general intelligence in these papers. The news was, rather naturally, 'coloured' to suit the policy of the Church; and the suppression of these bulletins by law undoubtedly did much to undermine the Church's power in certain rural districts.

In the north, however, the Law of Separation was very generally disregarded, and the local authorities found it inadvisable to endeavour to enforce it. Even the publication of the news bulletins was not entirely discontinued, while practically every member of the population of the smaller villages continued to wear in public the religious emblems associated with so many festivals of the Catholic Church.

It is obvious that the provisions of the Law of Separation were totally inconsistent with the free working not merely of the Roman Catholic but of almost every other conceivable voluntary Church. It cannot be a matter of surprise that it was objected to by the Vatican and by the Portuguese bishops, as substituting for the old ecclesiastical government the administration of the Church by lay associations under the supervision of the Ministry of Justice, and interfering in innumerable ways with its discipline, teaching, rites and ceremonies. Many protests were made by the chiefs of the hierarchy, and such was the opposition that sentences of banishment from their sees were issued against the Bishops of Oporto, Braga, and Faro, and also the Patriarch of Lisbon.

Senhor Chagas' Ministry did not survive for long. By November 8, a new Cabinet was formed under the

presidency of Senhor Vasconcellos, who, however, made no very violent changes in the policy of the Government.

By the end of the year it became apparent that it was the outer form rather than the spirit of the Portuguese Government which had changed, and that the new rulers were quite as incompetent and unscrupulous, and much more aggressive and dictatorial, than any of their predecessors in office. The five judges of the Court of Appeal had been dismissed at the beginning of the year for a legal decision unwelcome to the Government. This outrageous proceeding proved a serious blow to the independence of the magistracy. I was informed that judges had sought and been influenced by the directions of the Government, and one of them told the friends of a prisoner, from whom I heard it, that he was himself a Royalist and would gladly acquit, but dared not do so unless he received a hint to that effect from the Minister of Justice.

Another and somewhat comic instance of the part played by Republican politics in judicial business was brought to my notice. A Portuguese sought to recover in the Lisbon Civil Court the amount for which he had insured a house, destroyed by fire when the revolution of 1910 was at its height. The British insurance company objected that a clause, wisely inserted in the policy, provided that they should not be liable if the house were burnt during an insurrection, a war, a riot, a tumult, a disorder, or a civil disturbance of any kind. The plaintiff's advocates argued that descriptions such as these could not, without impropriety, be applied to the glorious revolution of 1910, and the judge accordingly submitted them one after another to the jury. Was that revolution, he inquired, an insurrection – was it a war – was it a riot – was it a tumult, or a

disorder, or a civil commotion, or a disturbance? To each of these questions they returned an emphatic No! How then, he asked, ought it to be described? Their reply was, 'As a social emancipation,' and as this was not one of the contingencies provided against in the insurance policy, he caused judgment to be recorded against the British defendants.

Among the chief reproaches which the Republicans had levelled at the old regime was the scandalous manipulation of public funds. It was proved in the course of a long debate in Parliament that a Republican politician, long after his appointment to the Legation in Italy had been refused by the Quirinal, had continued to draw the salary attached to that post, together with another paid to him in respect of an office in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs for political services to the Government.

The month of January, 1912, was marked by serious strikes by Syndicalists in Lisbon and by an unsuccessful attempt to paralyse the railway service throughout the country. The authorities acted with commendable promptitude and the strike was soon suppressed. The Government was, however, unable to resist the temptation which the proclamation of martial law had placed in its way to attack a different class of political opponents. On the flimsy pretext that the Royalists were in secret alliance with the Reds, it arrested various members of that party, amongst others the last Foreign Minister of the monarchy, Senhor Branco, whom its agents subjected to brutal and dastardly indignities. He was dragged from his bed at midnight, taken down to the arsenal and ordered to walk in pouring rain with a squad of arrested anarchists to a fort five miles off. On his pleading that his age and health made this physically

impossible, and asking to be conveyed in a carriage, he was flung on his back into a sailor's hammock and hauled through the streets to a convict prison at the north end of the city, the soldiers who formed his escort heaping the foulest insults on his own honour and on the virtue of his wife and daughters, and some of them even asking leave to kill him. On reaching the prison he was for several days subjected to the harshest treatment meted out to the worst convicts, refused permission to see anyone, even his lawyer, and denied any information as to the nature of the charges made against him. The Foreign Minister informed some of the foreign representatives that these charges were of the gravest character, and might even implicate the Marquis de Villalobar. But nothing further was ever heard of them, and their victim afterwards told me that his only offence was a private letter to a friend in Brazil which had been illegally opened in the post office before a state of siege was proclaimed and in which he had described the members of the Vasconcellos Cabinet as 'imbeciles.' It was, in fact, found impossible by the law officers to frame any substantial charge against him. Eventually he was released on depositing bail for future good behaviour to the amount of £2,000. His arrest and that of other Royalists served, however, the double purpose of gratifying the spite of certain prominent Republicans and of reconciling the extreme elements in the dominant party.

The success which had attended the dealings of the Chagas and Vasconcellos Ministries, both with the Royalist incursion of October and with the socialistic conspiracy in January, fostered the growth of a movement among the more moderate and conservative Republicans in the direction of a gentler and more conciliatory policy towards vanquished political op-

ponents. This movement found a leader in Senhor Antonio José d'Almeida, a sentimental idealist dreamer, yet not lacking in civic courage. Late in May, 1912, he called attention in Congress to the brutalities inflicted by Red mobs at Lisbon and Oporto upon Royalist prisoners on their way to jail or trial (in one case the cart conveying them was overturned and the prisoners clubbed and kicked as they lay helpless on the ground), and demanded an inquiry by a parliamentary commission into these outrages. The Government made the rejection of this motion a question of confidence, and the only result of Senhor d'Almeida's efforts was that he himself was threatened with murder and was obliged to send his young wife away from Lisbon to her home, while the former revolutionary hero, Machado Santos, the editor of a paper opposed to extreme measures, only escaped being killed by a bomb by the accident of his arrival a little later than usual at his office.

The Vasconcellos Ministry was, however, on the verge of its fall, and in June a new coalition was formed under Dr. Duarte Leite, an independent Republican, who accepted with considerable reluctance the premiership pressed upon him by all parties. He was a professor at Oporto, and was a well-tried Republican protagonist of moderate views and high personal character. The members of his Cabinet all belonged, like most Portuguese politicians, to the professional or upper middle class, but they possessed technical and professional, rather than political or parliamentary, experience.

The first duty of the new Premier was to deal with the serious strike of the Lisbon tramway men, provoked just before the fall of the previous Government by the dismissal of a subordinate for an assault on his

immediate superior. This task he performed with tact and vigour, warning the strikers that he must protect the right to work no less than the right to strike, and that if the British tramway company in Lisbon were able to find men to run their cars the labour syndicates would meddle with them at their peril. As the strikers refused all compromise the Government arranged with the tramway company that traffic should be resumed on June 21, and early on that day, as a precaution against threatened riots, Dr. Leite in his capacity as Minister of the Interior, ordered the sudden arrest in their own houses of the principal Syndicalist and labour leaders, who, before their followers were aware of what was happening, were marched down by a military detachment to the Tagus and safely lodged on a steamer in the river. The tramcars then resumed their service under the protection of the Republican Guard and of other troops, which occupied the company's various stations as well as the chief centres in the city. There were a few slight disturbances when the cars reappeared for the first time, escorted by mounted soldiers and police, amidst the hisses of the rabble and the applause of the shopkeepers in the business quarters of the city, who cheered and waved handkerchiefs at their windows. An incipient riot in the Rocio was suppressed by a few sharp cavalry charges, but some bombs were thrown by the strikers and by isolated anarchists at the troops and the cars, and killed or wounded a few passers-by. A sympathetic movement among the railway men was nipped in the bud by the military occupation of the chief termini, and another which broke out simultaneously among the cork-workers on the south of the Tagus collapsed, after lasting a few days, before the resolute firmness of the Government. These vigorous measures

were not altogether to the taste of the democratic members of the Cabinet, but Senhor Leite roughly intimated that any opposition on their part would involve his own instant resignation, and Senhor Costa shrank from a fresh ministerial crisis. The energy and success with which the Premier had stamped out what might have developed into a serious revolutionary movement increased his authority and prestige, and made him, for a time, highly popular among the law-abiding sections of society. He was soon, however, to find himself confronted by a new, and, to all seeming, a more formidable peril.

For some time past it had been very generally known that the Royalists were preparing for a fresh attempt at counter-revolution, and that a new incursion across the Galician frontier was to be supported by a military and civil rising at Lisbon and other places in Southern Portugal, as well as by similar outbreaks in the loyal and Catholic North. The plans of Couceiro, the Garibaldi of this war of liberation, were delayed by the seizure at Zeebrugge of a Belgian vessel with a cargo of arms and ammunition, just as she was about to start with a number of Portuguese volunteers. It was eventually decided that he should cross the frontier on or about July 6, and that a few hours before he did so a carefully prepared rising should take place at Lisbon and at other centres at which it had been planned.

Couceiro faithfully carried out his part of the undertaking. Royalist columns crossed the frontier at three places, but met with very little success. He was eventually driven off after a half-hearted attack upon the small frontier town of Montalegre.

A few risings in sympathy with Couceiro occurred at various places throughout the country, notably

at Cabeceira de Bastos, where the population, headed by their rector, Padre Domingos, opposed for a time a fairly effectual resistance to the Republican troops. The failure of this second rebellion was largely due to the ineptitude and garrulity of many of its local promoters, which, combined with a certain amount of treason in their own ranks, and with the activity of the Carbonario spies, revealed to the Cabinet the general scheme of the conspirators. By July 20 the entire movement had been crushed and its leaders had once more sought refuge in Spanish territory. It was in fact from the point of view of the internal support afforded to it a repetition on a larger scale of the Republican insurrection of 1901, when out of some hundred officers compromised, only three came out into the open on the signal for action being given.

The effect of the movement on the internal situation of the country was deplorable. It strengthened the position of the extreme Left, it filled the prisons with political suspects, it encouraged the triumphant Carbonaria, which boasted with some justice that its energy had saved the Republic, to arrest right and left, and in one instance to shoot a political opponent dead in the open street, and the mob of Lisbon once again to commit with impunity, under the eyes of the civil governor of the town and of their guard, brutal outrages on helpless prisoners, who were being conveyed to jail. It, moreover, afforded a pretext for the introduction and passage through Parliament, before it adjourned on July 10, of three laws 'for the defence of the Republic,' or 'strangling laws,' as their opponents quite legitimately termed them, for the purpose of further restricting (*a*) the liberty of the Press, (*b*) the right of meeting and free speech, and (*c*) the independence of the magistracy.

Among the victims of the campaign of panic and revenge which ensued was a British subject, Miss Oram, the correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, who was arrested early in August on a charge of political conspiracy. Her accusers were a Carbonario of bad character, himself awaiting trial for a theft from the War Office, in which he had worked as a clerk, and a disreputable youth of good family, who after serving and deserting Couceiro, had endeavoured to obtain admission to the privileged Carbonaria by tracking or inventing charges against suspected Royalists. My intervention on Miss Oram's behalf secured to her an immediate and fair trial, which resulted in her acquittal after a few days' detention, as well as in the payment of a pecuniary indemnity. But there is little doubt that had she been a Portuguese she would have remained in prison for months. A young lady who was arrested at the same time on an equally frivolous charge did not obtain a trial for more than half a year, and another political victim of whom I heard, the Portuguese cook of the Scottish chaplain at Lisbon, was in jail untried for nearly two years.

This is perhaps the place to say something of the much discussed question of the prisons, to which some importance was given by parliamentary references in London and by discussions in the British and Portuguese Press, during the first quarter of the year under review. It arose out of the private visits of certain English residents in Lisbon to personal friends, or acquaintances of personal friends, who had been, in common with many hundreds of suspects of all classes, thrown into prison. These visits led to the formation of a small committee of a perfectly private character which aimed at relieving the sufferings of the prisoners in the noisome and overcrowded Lisbon jails by

bringing them to the knowledge of the British Press, of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and of various members of the House of Commons. The movement began while I was absent on leave, and I was at first disposed, on general grounds of policy, to discourage it, unless I were satisfied that it was supported by the Foreign Office. But an appeal from a British subject at Oporto, whose son-in-law was, so he stated, suffering barbarous treatment in the fort of Alto do Duque, and a dispatch from the Foreign Office calling for information as to the truth of the reports about the prisons which had reached England, led me to pay a private visit of inquiry to four of the principal jails in the Lisbon district. Three of these I visited incognito, the fourth, the Limoeiro, in which incognito could not be maintained, under the auspices of its governor. I satisfied myself in the first three by conversations with the prisoners, carried on in the absence of warders or other officials, that the charge of deliberate barbarities inflicted upon them was generally untrue. One or two cases were, indeed, mentioned to me of brutal assaults by guards or fellow-prisoners upon Royalists arrested immediately after the first Couceiro raid. The prisons were, of course, as is common in the Latin countries, exceedingly badly equipped. They consisted for the most part of a series of subterranean passages, with damp streaming down the walls. They were infested by rats and other vermin, and, generally speaking, they were dark and in a very insanitary condition. It is difficult to defend a civilized Government which for an often considerable period places men not proved guilty of crime under such abominable restraint.

I found, however, no parallel to the cruelty of the infamous Telles Jordail, who, when in charge under Dom Miguel, of the fort of St. Julian, is said to have

stirred the broth supplied to his Liberal captives with a stick steeped in filth from the sewers. Much needed improvements were actually being made in the Limoeiro by a humane newly appointed governor. Still, the prisons were most of them horribly overcrowded: prisoners, sick and healthy, convicted and unconvicted, politicals and ordinary felons, being mixed up under very insanitary and, in some cases, revolting hygienic conditions. They were often kept untried for months and months on charges which, in any other country, would scarcely have justified their committal; and were made to pay, in the Limoeiro, extravagant prices for the enjoyment of the simplest comforts and decencies of life.

It so happened that Senhor Vasconcellos, with whom I had been in private correspondence about the complaint of the British subject above mentioned, quoted in Parliament some private observations which I had made to him about the exaggerated character of the charges of barbarity in the prisons, and asked me to allow him to confirm what he had said in a circular dispatch which he proposed addressing to the Portuguese Legations abroad. To have declined, on the ground that the matter was an internal one, on which I would rather not have been quoted, might have seemed unfriendly. I therefore reluctantly allowed him to refer to these personal and confidential remarks, subject to certain careful reservations. These reservations the Portuguese Minister in London communicated in an incorrect and misleading translation to the English Press, and this circumstance, combined with some questions and answers in Parliament on the subject of the Portuguese political prisoners, created a momentary stir in that of Lisbon, being made use of for their own special purposes by the various party

organs. Private representations subsequently made by me at the desire of the Government, on some of the worst features of the prison system, were helpful in the cases of a few individual sufferers, and led to the closing of the worst prison, that of Caxias, but the Ministry's dread of the Left was too great for it to apply real remedies, unless in deference to stronger diplomatic pressure than would perhaps have been consistent with my instructions, and it steadily refused to grant the amnesty recommended by the more moderate Republicans. In the summer, however, the attention of the President of the Republic was called, by the statements in certain Portuguese papers, to an unusually bad case, that of a prisoner named Antonio Ribas, who had been subjected to very shocking outrages and tortures, from the effects of which he was actually dying, chiefly because he had once, in the exercise of his duties as a policeman, arrested Senhor Costa on a suspicion of complicity in the murder of King Carlos. The President himself visited the prisons and procured, by an exercise of his prerogative of clemency, the release of Ribas and with him of numerous aged felons, criminal lunatics, and other victims of disease. This, however, could only be deemed a palliative; and it is not too much to say that the manner in which political prisoners were dealt with continued to remain a deep blot upon the administration of the Portuguese Government.

Like the preceding Government, the Leite Ministry had but a short life, and towards the end of the year 1912, just before my transfer from Lisbon to Madrid, it collapsed. Senhor Leite himself, however, did not definitely resign – a delay being rendered necessary on account of the difficulty of constructing any Cabinet to succeed him.

The outbreak of hostilities in the Balkan Peninsula and the possibility that the war might become a general one were viewed with some anxiety by the statesmen of the Portuguese Republic. Little interest was, indeed, taken in the actual struggle, in a small isolated country such as this. It was also to be noted that none of the Portuguese regarded Germany's preparations for war, which were even then being carried on, with any mistrust, although they realized that in the event of a victory for the Triple Alliance their colonies would probably be seized by the Teutonic Power, and that Spain might take advantage of the temporary crippling of British resources to destroy Portuguese independence. The Portuguese Government seemed to think it might be possible to insure against this danger by concluding a defensive alliance with Spain, as a complement to its existing alliance with England, the object being to make the Iberian Peninsula a sort of counterpoise to Italy in the general politics of Europe. The scheme appeared rather fantastic, nor was it easy to see what the Spanish Government would gain by falling in with it.

CHAPTER VIII

SPAIN IN WAR TIME

I PASSED a year in Portugal and then went on to Madrid. Soon after my arrival there, towards the end of May, 1913, Señor Maura, a leading Conservative statesman, delivered a philippic against the Liberal Government then in power, which was described by friends and enemies alike as perhaps the finest speech he had ever made.

The Conservative leader's fierce attack on the Republicans caused the three Republican leaders to define the attitude of their respective groups, the Radicals, the 'Reformists,' and the 'Republican-Socialist Union,' and all three agreed in declaring that the share taken by the King in recent public questions had modified their hostility to the monarchy.

The prorogation of the Cortes only a fortnight after they had assembled gave rise to legitimate criticism. The Marquis of Alhucemas, who had aimed at the leadership of the Liberal party, issued a manifesto, signed by some 125 Liberal senators and deputies, expressing strong disapproval of the manner in which Parliament had been treated, and on the eve of its reassembly at the end of October made a speech rendering definite his rupture and that of his personal following, with the Cabinet. He declared that, although not divided from Count Romanones by any question of principle, he disapproved of his methods of government.

There was thus, when the long-deferred reassembling of the Cortes took place, an open rupture between the two leading politicians in the Liberal party and their respective followings. This led to the resignation of the Cabinet, which was succeeded by a Conservative Government under Señor Dato.

King Alfonso's attitude towards the Republican faction during the negotiations which followed the two ministerial crises was of much service to the interests of the dynasty, in so far as it tended to divide the Republicans and to detach from the party of revolution a certain body of moderate Republican opinion, led by Señor Azcarate. The King is said to have assured the latter that he neither expected nor wished him to break with his Republican past. Señor Azcarate was evidently much impressed by the personal character of the King and by His Majesty's declaration that, if the Spanish nation declared for a Republic, he would himself willingly serve in its army.

The personal popularity of the King was intensified by an attempt to assassinate him, made happily without any result, as he was riding back on April 13, surrounded by his staff and the foreign military attachés, from a march past. The would-be assassin, a youth named Alegre, who had served in 1910 in a Valencian regiment, but had been invalided for epilepsy, stepped suddenly out of the crowd in the Calle de Alcala, just whilst the royal procession was passing, and fired three shots in rapid succession at His Majesty at a distance of about ten paces. The King's horse swerved to the right, so that none of the shots touched him, and he displayed his usual composure. The man was at once knocked down by the spectators, but fired a fourth shot from the ground. The act, which was condemned by the leaders of all parties, including the Republicans, was a mere isolated crime, and its author, a semi-insane malcontent, was not connected with any political conspiracy. The death penalty, to which he was duly sentenced after trial, was commuted by the King's own wish to one of penal servitude for life.

I had been in Spain only a few months when, early in July, 1914, the Serajevo crime, which I need not describe in detail, disturbed the diplomatic body assembled at San Sebastian, Leixoes, and other seaside summer resorts. It was, of course, assumed that the demands for satisfaction made by Austria would, generally speaking, be accepted by Serbia. But the latter State was unable to agree to the demand that the inquiry should be conducted by Austrian judges, a proposal inconsistent with the Serbian constitution and law. The representatives of the Triple Alliance would, however, hear of no concession, and the German Ambassador, Prince Ratibor, and in a lesser degree the Austrian Baron Greindl, were clearly bent on inflicting a humiliating punishment on Serbia.

I remember that at this time I was about to go on leave, and when I mentioned this fact to Prince Ratibor, he looked at me superciliously and said:

'Do you really think you are going?'

'Certainly,' I said, 'that is my intention.'

'Don't you know that we are on the eve of a very big war?' was his reply.

My French colleague, M. Geoffrey, did his best to avert a catastrophe, but in vain. He often pressed me to reassure him on behalf of my own Government.

'Vous n'allez pas nous lâcher?' he would say.

'Que voulez-vous que je vous dise?' was my reply. 'J'espère que non, mais je n'ai point d'instructions.'

The various suggestions put forward by the French Government to Germany only met with evasive replies from Berlin. But a day or so later, when matters seemed least hopeful, I went into San Sebastian from our seaside resort at Zarauz. No sooner had I reached the town than I received a telegram, which read as follows: 'Hold yourself in readiness to receive message:

Prepare for war with Germany. Instruct Consuls.' The relief of this message was immense.

There was at once a rush upon the banks, and rich residents and travellers in a few hours found themselves without a peseta to pay for a luncheon – even including M. Bauer, Rothschild's representative – and a complete inability to obtain credit.

A day or so afterwards – I write from a memory overshadowed by the tension of the hour – I attended, with my colleagues, a funeral service at San Sebastian for the deceased Pope. As I entered the church the American Ambassador, Mr. Willard, held out his hand to me. After grasping it, I held out my hand to the German Minister, who put his behind his back, which he turned to me. From that time onward I cut my former colleague as though he were the ghost of a defunct German Emperor, which I need no longer acknowledge. But although we broke off our personal relations, the Austrian Ambassador, Prince Fürstenberg, and I continued on outwardly courteous terms. As the Spanish Foreign Minister we were fortunate in having a statesman so friendly to British interests as the Marquis of Lema. Educated in England, he was a sincere Anglophile. The Germans even described him in their papers as 'Lord Lema.'

The outbreak of the conflict took Spain, as it did other countries, by surprise; all the more so, as the desire of the Serbian Government to meet Austria as far as possible, consistently with its own constitutional obligations, was from the first as obvious as it was natural. The attitude of the Government of Vienna was that of the wolf in the fable of the wolf and the lamb. It was viewed with some indifference among Spaniards, until the threats directed against Serbia made the issue one of Austria versus Russia, and thus

indirectly, owing to the Franco-Russian alliance, one of Germany versus France. The mobilization of the Russian army, the menacing language used on frivolous pretexts by the German Ambassador at Paris to M. Viviani, and the cynical violation of Belgian neutrality which forced England to enter into the conflict, all followed one another with such rapidity that Spanish public opinion could hardly keep pace with them. But when the German army was almost in sight of Paris, and the Allied Ambassadors left for Bordeaux with the French Government, the majority of Spaniards, whatever their personal sympathies, prophesied a repetition of the events of 1871, and the wish was doubtless father to the thought.

Sympathy for Germany, and perhaps the stronger sentiment of antipathy to France, soon developed and assumed an active form in the Conservative elements of Spanish society, and more especially in the army (for the Spanish officers revered Prussia as the ideal military State), as also among the clergy. The Papal Nuncio, Archbishop Ragonesi, who was ex-officio dean of our diplomatic body, represented Pope Benedict XV, once the secretary, when he and I were both of us young colleagues at Madrid, of the Francophile Cardinal Rampolla, and an important minority of the Spanish Bench of Bishops, notably the Archbishop of Tarragona, which corresponds to York with us, were cordial supporters of the Allies. Much good was done by British Catholic propaganda and assistance, notably that of Bishop Amigo of Southwark, himself a native of Gibraltar. Speaking Spanish with a slight Andalusian accent, he interviewed the leading members of the Spanish episcopate and was often rather coldly received. Another very valuable helper was the Belgian, Monsignor Deplaige, who eloquently

pleaded the wrongs of his oppressed native land, and whose powers of persuasion were very great. A Spanish nobleman of high rank, a friend of my own, whose family owned an estate in Belgium, and who had himself signed a strong protest against the destruction of the University of Louvain, was warned by the German authorities that unless he withdrew his signature his lands near Namur would be ravaged and his house burnt to the ground. He asked Deplaige for his advice.

'Your own conscience,' replied the Belgian prelate, 'must be your guide, but if you wish for my opinion, I imagine that a Spanish knight of so many noble orders would not show greater cowardice than Pontius Pilate. Even Pilate, when requested by the Jews to alter, as insufficiently offensive, the inscription which he had placed on our Saviour's cross, had at least the courage to answer, "Quod scripsi, scripsi." '

My Spanish friend the Marquis de Mina (now Fernan Nuñez) took the hint, and King Alfonso intervened on his behalf, I believe with complete success, at Berlin.

The outbreak of the war caused, as its first effect, a financial panic. The values of all the currencies of the nations involved went down; but the knowledge that England had determined to intervene to some extent checked this movement.

The Conservative Government in power at Madrid, as represented by the moderate Prime Minister, Señor Dato, and the Anglophile Foreign Minister, the Marquis of Lema, had for some time before the war rather leaned to the Anglo-French Entente and had shown itself favourable to an understanding with the Western Powers in regard to their respective interests in Morocco. But this aspiration was now coun-

tered by a new hope, namely, that a German victory might remove the opportunity for concessions to France in Northern Africa, and that England, if defeated by the Germans, would be forced to surrender Gibraltar.

When the French Government withdrew to Bordeaux and the German armies overran Champagne, and appeared to be on the point of entering Paris, the defeat of the Allies was believed to be a certainty in the large body of opinion which always inclines to back the likely winners, and these people swung round more and more to the German side. Many personal friends of my own, who were not themselves Germanophile, were convinced that the Allies were already defeated, and these contemplated the prospect of their defeat with an ever-increasing satisfaction. This sentiment was peculiarly strong among the Carlists and the extreme Catholic elements, especially in Navarre and the Basque Provinces, which, without being disloyal to the monarchy of King Alfonso, were yet Carlists in all but the name. The Carlists were, however, more anti-English than anti-French, for they remembered the help which the Conservative Governments of France had afforded to Don Carlos during the civil strife which had preceded the restitution of Alfonso XII to the throne, while his son, the actual Carlist Pretender, Don Jaime, a member of the royal house of Bourbon, professed, as the nearest legitimate heir of Louis XIV, to be on the side of the country which he regarded as the cradle of his race.

In Biscay there was, on the other hand, a curious leaning towards Anglophile sentiments. A large section of Basque public opinion, represented by a well-written Home Rule and Catholic paper, known as the *Euskadi*, regarded England with a certain sympathy,

as a Power animated by decentralizing tendencies and protector of the rights of small States and of weak races. Biscay, moreover, did a flourishing trade through Bilbao with England, more especially when, as the war proceeded, we imported an increasingly large quantity of her mineral products for the purposes of our armaments. In Biscay, perhaps more than in any other Spanish province, except possibly Catalonia, the pressure for a fuller measure of local Home Rule was intense. At Guernica I was shown the ancient hall in which the old Basque Parliaments assembled, and the bare skeleton of the venerable oak tree, protected by a glass case from rain and wind, before which the mediæval sovereigns of Spain had sworn to defend the ancient *fueros* or local privileges of Biscay. I asked the aged guardian of the Parliament House when the last meeting of its notables had actually taken place. 'There has been none,' he sadly answered, 'since liberty was finally abolished at the close of the fifteenth century.'

Somewhat similar sentiments prevailed in Catalonia, the great industrial maritime province, which, together with other parts of the old Kingdom of Aragon, had fought on the side of the Anglo-Austrian allies in the wars of the Spanish Succession, and had been somewhat basely betrayed by the Tory Governments of Harley and of Bolingbroke. The possession of a common language, or rather dialect, united the French and Spanish Catalans, and many thousands of these latter went over to France to fight in the ranks of the French army. On the other hand, throughout Castile the anti-French feeling first aroused by Napoleon's invasion, and by the many acts of cruelty and vandalism attending it, was still strong and exceedingly bitter. A few weeks after the outbreak of the war, I

happened to visit Avila, the city consecrated by the memory of St. Theresa, and was shown over the cathedral by a very friendly monk. In one of the chapels he pointed out to me some fine tombs of mediæval Spanish kings, whose effigies had been wantonly defaced. 'I suppose,' I said, 'that this mutilation was the work of the French invaders?' His hitherto cheerful countenance was suddenly transfigured by hate. 'Yes,' he said, 'you're right, but, thank God, they are paying for it to-day.'

A few months earlier I had spent some days at Badajoz, and I thought it only polite to express to a Spanish friend, who had shown me over the antiquities of the city, my regret for the horrors which had marked its savage sack by the Duke of Wellington's troops. 'Not at all,' he replied, 'your soldiers were much too humane: the inhabitants of Badajoz deserved all and more than they got. Were they not, to a man, "afrancesados," or partisans of France – and what crime could be greater than that and deserve severer punishment?'

The bitterest enemy of England amongst Spanish politicians was the celebrated Carlist orator and deputy from Navarre, Señor Vasquez Mella. At a huge meeting in the chief theatre at Madrid, which was attended by a crowd of fashionable ladies, he thundered for nearly two hours against the modern Carthage, perfidious Albion. But if some of the members of the so-called extreme Right were strong pro-Germans, the parties of the Left, both Liberal and Radical, were, taken as a whole, decidedly pro-Ally. The Liberal leader, Count Romanones, agreed with the more moderate Conservatives of the reasonably conservative school of Dato and of Lema, in favouring our cause; and the extreme Left, including the Republican

Socialists and Catalan Home Rulers, were almost too embarrassingly pro-French, so much so that when socialistic disorders, instigated by its leaders, broke out in the capital, as well as at Bilbao, it was easy for the Germans, on the principle of '*is fecit cui prodest*,' to attribute them to the bribes and disloyal intrigues of the Allies. This charge was rendered specious by the circumstance that a number of gold sovereigns, struck during the reign of Queen Victoria, were found on the persons of some of the conspirators arrested, thus enabling our German enemies to spread the rumour that the Allied Governments were fomenting a Republican rebellion by means of English gold. The real – and rather interesting – fact was that the French had, after the war of 1870, paid a large part of their indemnity to Germany in gold coins obtained from London, and that the Victorian sovereigns had been re-exported from Berlin to Spain, in order to fix upon England the odium of fomenting a revolt against the Spanish throne. The device was not entirely unsuccessful and imposed upon many simple minds, so much so that one of our King's Messengers was actually arrested in the Asturias as a revolutionary agent.

The Spanish Court reflected the divisions which prevailed among Spanish politicians. The Queen-Mother as an Austrian Archduchess and Queen Victoria as an English Princess, would not have been human had they not each felt a natural sympathy for the countries of their birth. In this connection I remember an amusing experience of my own. Whilst walking with one of my secretaries, Mervyn Herbert, in the neighbourhood of the seaside village of Zarauz, near San Sebastian, we met these two royal ladies driving together in one of their carriages. As we raised our hats and bowed to them their Majesties

stopped. I moved towards the right-hand seat, which the Queen-Mother occupied, and my secretary towards that of the Queen Consort. Queen Christina at once asked me if I had any news of the war, and as the only information which had reached me was that of the fall of Lemberg, which I was naturally reluctant to impart, I answered in evasive terms; but, a few moments later, the young Queen turned to her mother-in-law and reported the news, which my secretary had given her, about Lemberg.

'Why did you not tell me this?' said Queen Christina to me. 'It is surely a very important event.'

' Of course, Madame, it is,' I replied, in some confusion; 'and I therefore assumed that your Majesty must already have learnt it at the palace. We ourselves heard it some hours ago.'

During a very difficult time the consideration of Queen Christina towards the Allies was characteristic of this royal lady's tact and innate courtesy to every one. She was very kind to me personally. The only time I ever saw Her Majesty really vexed was on the entry of the Italians into the war. When they joined the Allies Queen Christina's indignation was great. As an Austrian Princess she naturally had no love for the hereditary enemies of her country, and she put to me a somewhat awkward question, asking me:

'Ne trouvez-vous pas que ces Italiens agissent comme des cochons?'

I was a good deal embarrassed, but replied as politely as I could:

'Madame, il m'est assez difficile d'appliquer le terme de "cochon" aux alliés du Gouvernement du Roi mon maître.'

One of the chief factors, however, in Spanish politics was the deserved influence of Queen Christina,

the widow of Alfonso XII, and a princess of great ability and wisdom. After her husband's death she had devoted the rest of her life to the education of the boy King, and, with a view to his healthy upbringing, they had lived principally in the invigorating climate of the Basque Provinces, instead of in the hot, dry atmosphere of Castile. This was not a purely hygienic consideration, though it doubtless weighed with his devoted royal mother. Still, it was not the only reason: for she was anxious to win over two powerful elements, first, the Carlist party, which represented the powerful Basque population, ultra-jealous of its ancient 'fueros,' of Biscaya, Guipuscoa, Alava and Navarra, whose inhabitants, when excited, were wont to describe themselves as 'equal to the King, but slightly better' ('hidalgos como el Rey y un poco mejores'). The second element which weighed with the Queen was that constituted by the Basque clergy, who had taken a conspicuous part in the wars against the 'Cristinos' or partisans of an earlier Queen Christina, the widow of Ferdinand VII, representing the most rigid type of Spanish reaction against the Liberal policy which had now for many years been supreme in one form or other, save during the stormy time which had witnessed the expulsion of Isabel II, the brief reign of Amadeus of Savoy, the Radical and Cantonalist rebellions and the final suppression of armed Carlism. For Carlism was really strong throughout the Basque Provinces. Its leaders were extremists, and decidedly not to be trifled with: their typical heroes were persons of the type of Narvaez, who, when asked by his chaplain on his death-bed if he forgave all his numerous enemies, replied, 'I am sorry to disappoint you, but the fact is I have none, as I have now either shot or hanged them

all.' Except as set forth in the eloquent speeches of Vasquez Mella, Carlism was almost as dead as the famous oak of Guernica, to which I have already referred. It is now a leafless trunk, whose branches are kept together by nails.

One of the most notable Basque institutions is their special militia or 'migueletes' – local military forces, which wear a peculiar uniform of their own. I was struck with the respect which this militia and administration inspired in Navarra and Biscay, as also by the sympathy with which these old institutions were viewed by their local guardians and supporters. The excellence of the roads, which I frequently noticed in my journeys, was a striking evidence of the practical value of the administration.

The King of Spain, although, as a neutral and constitutional sovereign, he was careful to observe, like his Cabinet, an attitude of strict impartiality, often spoke to me, and to the other foreign representatives, about the prospects and progress of the war. It is not, I think, indiscreet now to say that his personal sympathies were with us, that he had no great love for the Emperor William, that he repeatedly interfered to prevent the adoption of harsh measures by the Germans, and that his Minister at Brussels, the Marquis of Villalobar, did his best, in conjunction with his American colleague, to prevent the execution of Miss Cavell. The Spanish representative strongly pressed the folly of such a step, but in vain. He urged the German resident, Von Lanken, to insist on a reference to the Emperor before the sentence was carried out, and impressed on him the disastrous effect which it could not fail to produce in neutral countries. But the German civil authorities did not dare to interfere with the decisions of a court martial. I believe that an

appeal to William II for a suspension or reconsideration of the sentence at least pending an appeal to Berlin would have been successful; and in the cases of two French ladies, who were actually condemned to death for a similar offence, a telegram from the King of Spain to the German Emperor and also to the Pope was successful in obtaining its commutation into one of penal servitude for life, which, of course, in practice, only meant for the duration of the war. King Alfonso, moreover, established a department in the palace for communicating with wounded and imprisoned soldiers of all the belligerent nationalities, with a view to assisting them, and acquainting their relatives with their whereabouts, which thus served to relieve a great mass of human suffering. In order to prevent the torpedoing of Allied hospital ships, he also arranged for placing on board them selected Spanish officers, who, if challenged by enemy submarines or other hostile vessels, could certify that they were not, as the Germans sometimes argued, ships of war in disguise, and thus entitled to be fired upon or captured. It would indeed be difficult to exaggerate the beneficent effect of the Spanish Sovereign's humanitarian activities in diminishing the destructive effects of the war, or the number of lives which they saved.

One of the baits which the German agents held out to their Spanish supporters was the prospect of the recovery of Gibraltar for Spain. It was not difficult to point out to Spanish public opinion that even if this end was achieved, it would prove of little real advantage to Spanish interests, for it was certain that if Germany were substituted for England on the Rock, she would only transfer it to Spain in return for another position of corresponding value in the Straits. In order to be able to communicate with her trans-

marine dependencies, she must possess a coaling station and a military stronghold at the entrance of the Mediterranean; in other words, she must retain Gibraltar itself or substitute for it the fortress and harbour of Ceuta.

Throughout the years for which the struggle lasted, commercial pressure was employed in neutral countries, such as Spain, by all the contending Powers. Of these the most effective was the so-called 'Black List,' itself, like the German asphyxiating gases and other unpleasant innovations, a device of Teutonic invention. The first unpleasant form which it assumed was an intimation to the Spanish Press that any paper unfriendly to Germany would have its German advertisements immediately recalled, and that any merchant dealing with the Allies would be forbidden to do business with any German firm. The example thus set was followed, and far more effectually, by the Allies, for they were masters of the seas, more especially after Italy joined them. The Black List gave us a great deal of work, and in some cases injured quite innocent Spaniards. I was much amused at the complaint of a comfortable Barcelona merchant, who came home with a tragic tale of woe. As he had close relations with England he had brought into his office an English typist, a pretty girl of about eighteen, with blue eyes and a mass of wavy golden hair. This Helen of Troy, he explained, had upset his entire establishment, for the clerks were always near her machine on one pretext or another, and if work was to be done, he must, he said, get rid of her. When he suggested seeking another place to her, she complained to the local English chaplain that her nationality was her only crime in the eyes of her Germanophile employer: the English colony took the matter up, and the unfortunate man was

placed on the Black List. I was able to do him tardy justice, and allowed him once more to trade with England. What befell Helen of Troy I cannot say; I hope she found a good husband among his clerks.

As the war neared its close, in July, 1918, the intervention of America and the eastward advance of the French army made it every day more and more probable that the triumph of the Allies was not far off. The pro-German party in Spain then began to feel that it had backed the wrong horse, and its sympathies for the German cause cooled. The collapse of Austria, the dethronement of the Emperor William, and the final establishment of Socialistic Republics at Berlin and at Vienna, dispelled the enthusiasm which so many Spanish Conservatives had entertained for what had seemed to them the cause of monarchy as against democracy and of religion as opposed to unbelief. Great sympathy was felt for the Emperor Charles of Austria, but not much for the Prussian Imperial House, more especially when the Emperor fled to Holland without attempting to strike a blow for his dynasty and country. The Germanophile Press, or what remained of it, still endeavoured to underrate the importance of the victory won by the Allies and to attribute it to the internal disturbances and revolutions which had brought apparent defeat to Germany in the hour of impending victory; but during the last few months of the war the troublesome activities of the German submarines on the Spanish coast, when they torpedoed Spanish merchantmen carrying cargoes to France and England, and the unpleasant incidents and discussions which followed these events, led to a threat from the Spanish Government to refuse to permit them to enter Spanish waters. It is probable that but for the fear of offending Germany and of trouble

with her supporters at home, her ruthless destruction of Spanish merchant shipping would have led Spain to depart in the end from her neutrality; but it was not unnatural that the rulers of a country in which the division of opinion on the war had necessitated the formation of a succession of Coalition Governments, should endeavour until the last month to avoid a departure from the cautious policy on which the majority of its people was resolved to the last to insist.

One curious result of the divisions among Spanish politicians was to make the formation of a homogeneous minority difficult, and this tended to provoke a series of coalitions with the weakness which is always existent in these temporary combinations. But when a Coalition Government appealed to the country, it was precluded by the nature of its being from bringing pressure to bear in favour of one or other of the sections which composed it, and, the first time for many years, elections uninfluenced by unofficial pressure were held in Spain. Whether this system has been persevered in, I do not know – the old methods were a good deal simpler.

Before closing this chapter I cannot refrain from acknowledging the debt of gratitude I owe to all the Spanish ministers and statesmen with whom I came into contact during the very difficult period of my residence in Spain, and particularly to Count Romanones, to the Marquis de Lema, and to Señores Dato and Maura. But for their unfailing friendliness and courtesy the work of the British Embassy during the war would have been rendered infinitely more troublesome and embarrassing.

On leaving Madrid my diplomatic life came to an end, and I finally retired in 1920.

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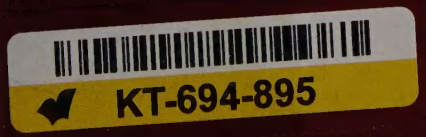
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